Metalsmith

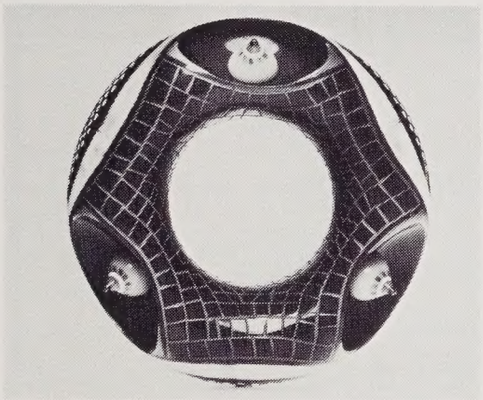
Fall 1990
Volume 10 Number 4
$7

Photo: Larry Rosenberg

Harold Hasselschwert

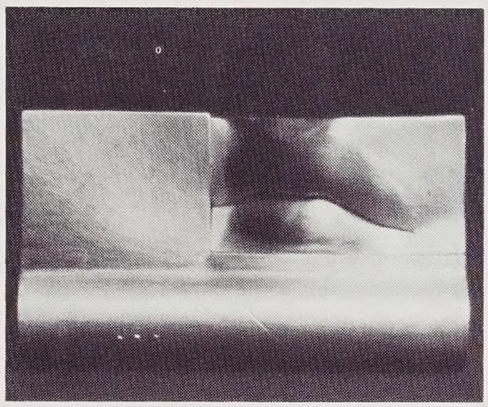
Untitled Copper Plate
enamel on copper, 1983
See page 22

Peter Chang
SEPTEMBER 11 - OCTOBER 6



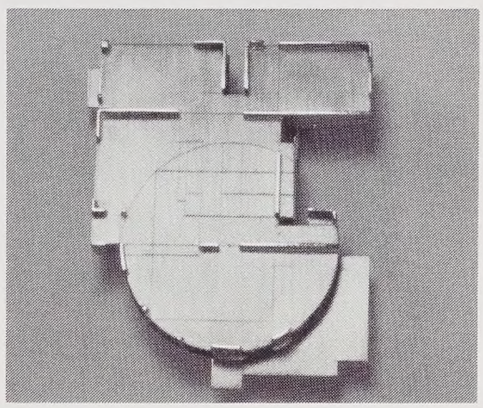
Bracelet, 1988, acrylic

Bruno Martinazzi
OCTOBER 11 - NOVEMBER 3



"Mito e Logos", Brooch, 1988, gold

Michael Becker
NOVEMBER 8 - DECEMBER 1



"Grotta" Brooch (after Richard Meier), 1989, gold

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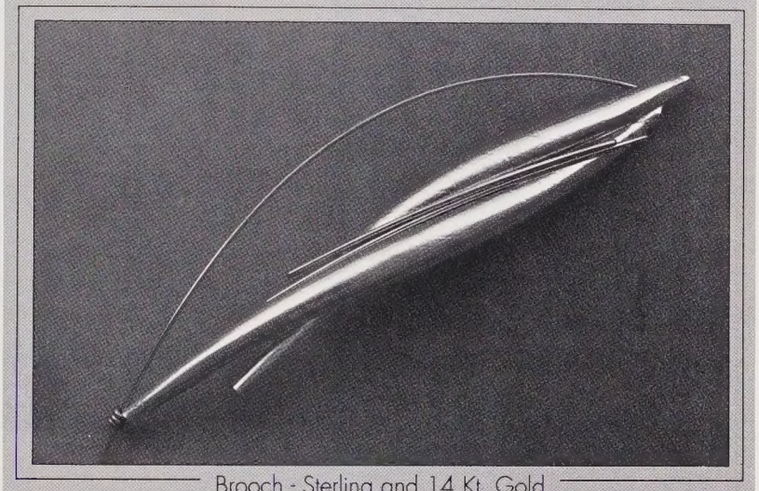

Brooch - Sterling and 14 Kt. Gold

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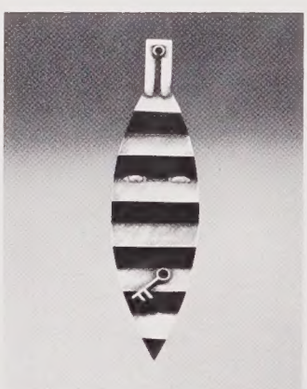
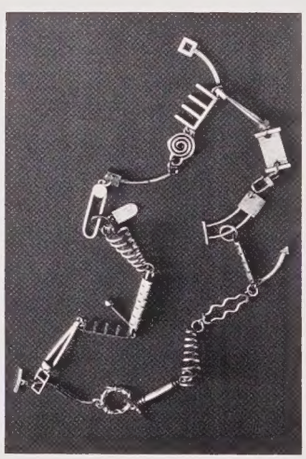


BUCK



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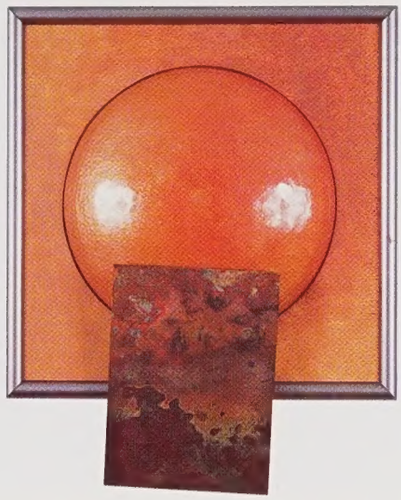
Metalsmith

Fall 1990

Volume 10 Number 4



Harlan Butt, *Ten Bulls in a Quantum Field #8*
copper, enamel, hardboard, acrylic, 13 x 5 x 15", 1989
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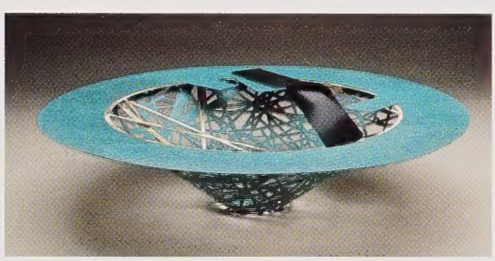
copper, brass, patina, solder, 22 1/2 x 22 1/2 x 5", 1990
Photo: Will Gullette

Right
Helen Shirk, *Line of Division* (full view). See page 14



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Editorial

At Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago, Industrial Design Professor Jay Doblin used to give his class an assignment to design the universal teacup. It sounds simple: design a cup that everyone can use, regardless of cultural and physical differences. Most students are quick, too quick, to the task, thinking that teacups have evolved hardly at all from the T'ang Dynasty model with small, footed base, curving sides and flaring rim to the sturdy whiteware cup and saucer served up at the local diner. Their solution, then, is something very close to the teacup we are accustomed to using every day.

What brought to mind this deceptive though classic design problem was the photo, below, of Hermann Jünger's spoon collection, sent by Lisa Spiros to accompany her article in this issue. A spoon is a shallow bowl with a handle; it must be rigid yet comfortable to hold, capable of transporting food and liquid to the mouth efficiently. In theory, it would seem that all spoons are *essentially* alike. But, can you envision the spoon that would work as well for eating grapefruit as for a bowlful of noodles, can scrape out a gourd as well as stir a dainty cup of espresso? On one hand, the Chinese have used white porcelain soup spoons for ages, and, on the other, Arne Jacobsen recently designed a Danish stainless steel version specific to right-handed and left-handed slurpers. Even though the basic concept is the same, we continue to make spoons that reflect cultural preferences. In fact, there is no universal spoon (as there is no teacup), only cultural variants on the theme. The differences become more interesting than the similarities.

The cup and spoon carry meaning by way of cultural, material, functional, personal, emotional, decorative attributes, depending on the decisions of the maker and the needs of the community he/she serves. It is clear that Hermann Jünger collects spoons not because they are all alike but because they are all different, and he delights in recognizing and cataloging these differences in his private memory bank for his own artistic uses. The more universal the form, the more fascinating is his discovery of the maker's intent, the user's ceremony and the historian's classification. The countries listed beneath the spoons shown below are a first step towards assessing their meaning. Ultimately, the spoon disappears and the indicators – cultural sensitivity, personal markings and evidence of use – become all-important in its appreciation and naming.

The articles in this issue can be read with an eye to the cultural meaning behind the work, signs of circumstantial evidence as much as geography, material and intention. Are Helen Shirk's vessels, for example, amalgams of the British ceramic tradition and Southern California painting? What does it mean to locate an object in a certain time and place? How are Harlan Butt's vessels clearly Japanese, and what happens when they move from tabletop to wall?

When Lisa Spiros describes her experience in the Brooklyn Museum with Hermann Jünger, she notes his concern less with the pieces than with the cultural "influx" that they convey. "Underlying his apprehension," she writes, "is an insatiable desire to assimilate the cultural and social beliefs of the makers and users, regardless of what he is looking at." His purpose is to examine in depth, to flesh out everything that is not apparent in a work – what he can't see is as important and telling as what he can readily observe.

What Jünger derives form his spoon collection is not their innate spoonness but how they have contributed to the life of the user, how they reveal their history, what does it mean to live life by conveying the marks of one's presence.

Why aren't we content to own just one spoon? Ask Hermann Jünger.

— SB

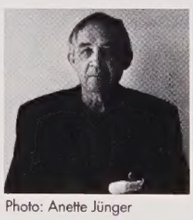

Photo: Anette Jünger

Japan Rome New York Palazzuolo Berlin Africa

Metalsmith

The Journal of the Society of North American Goldsmiths

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Design: Mary Melilli, Richard Mehl
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Contributing Editors: Jamie Bennett, Bruce Metcalf, Bernard Bernstein, Robert Cardinale, Elizabeth Skidmore Sasser, C.E. Licka, Deborah Norton
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Metalsmith is published quarterly by the Society of North American Goldsmiths (SNAG), a nonprofit organization, 5009 Londonderry Drive, Tampa, FL 33647.
Annual membership rates, which include a subscription to *Metalsmith:*
$50 for Distinguished Members,
$45 for Members and Institutions,
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Annual subscription to *Metalsmith* (4 issues):
$26 United States; $36 all other countries (surface mail).

Address membership and subscription inquiries to:
Bob Mitchell, SNAG, 5009 Londonderry Drive, Tampa, FL 33647. Telephone (813) 977-5326
Claims for missing issues only accepted if received within four months (USA, Canada, Mexico), elsewhere six months.

Address advertising inquiries to:
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Address editorial material to:
Sarah Bodine, Editor, 7089 N. River Road, Star Route 73, New Hope, PA 18938
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Metalsmith is indexed in Art Index; on-line (computer) indexing is available through Wilsonline, 950 University Ave., Bronx, NY 10452. Additionally, *Metalsmith* is indexed biennially in the winter issue.

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ISSN 0270-1146

Third class postage permit at Lewiston, Maine and additional mailing offices.

To obtain additional copies of *Metalsmith,* write: Bob Mitchell, 5009 Londonderry Drive, Tampa, FL 33647. Telephone (813) 977-5326

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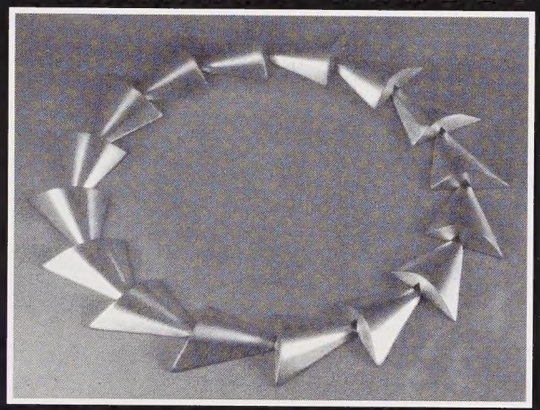
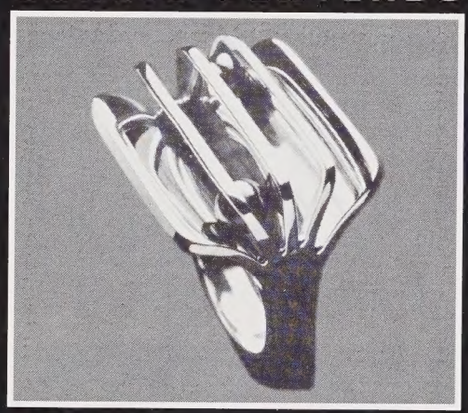


HOLLOWARE NECKPIECE, STERLING SILVER

SERGIO PENTEADO



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What's Coming ... in the next issue

William Harper:
Artist as Alchemist

Focus:
The Goblet

Ed Levin:
40 years of Jewelrymaking

C. Carl Jennings:
El Diablo Forge

Drummer
From the King
Island Dancer Belt :
Fossil Ivory, Sterling.
Pin/Pendant - 2 1/2"h.
DENISE WALLACE 1990

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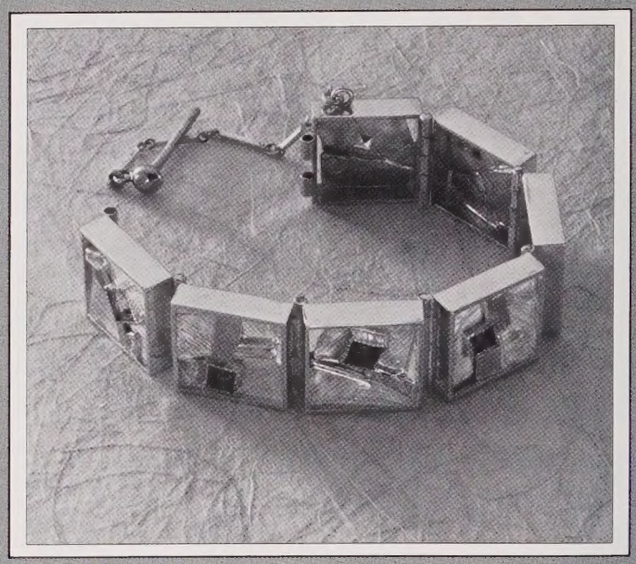

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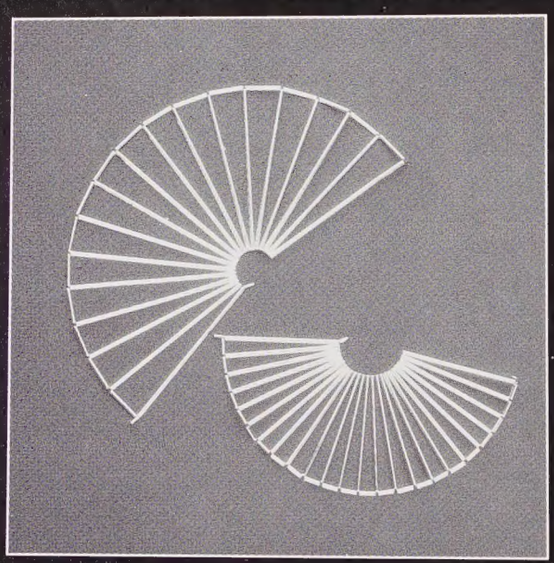

FLORABOOK, DOUBLE PINS: Sterling tubes, monofilament

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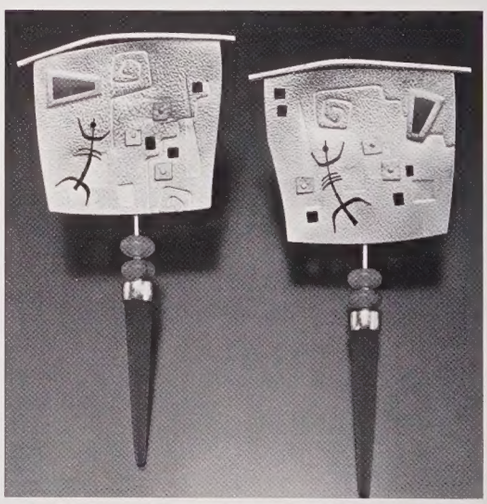

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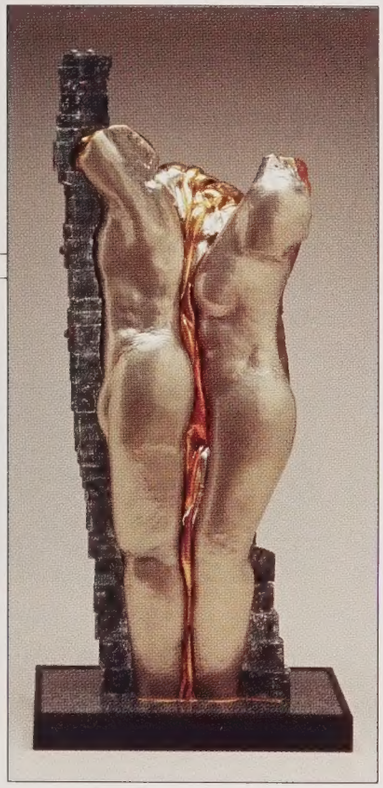

"OVERLOOK" 1990 (From The River Series) Mixed Metals 26 1/2 x 12 x 8

Photo By Bill McDowell

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Frederick L. Lauritzen 1921 – 1990

Bottle, copper, 1965

Pin, silver, 3½ x 2¼", 1955 – 60

Jeweler, metalsmith and teacher, Frederick Lauritzen died of cancer at his home in Northridge, California on May 3 of this year. Born in Detroit, Fred was determined to be an artist. Soon after enrolling in a work-study engineering course at General Motors, he left to begin painting on his own. Despite lack of support from his otherwise loving parents, he became an art student at Detroit's Wayne University, paying his tuition with a Roosevelt-era youth program. After World War II Air Corps service, Fred resumed his education, earning B.F.A. and M.F.A. degrees in painting and jewelry from Cranbrook Academy of Art. Later, on a Louis Comfort Tiffany Award, Fred studied with Hans Christiansen at the Rochester Institute of Technology School for American Craftsmen; this experience nurtured his interest in Ecclesiastical metalwork and Scandinavian design values.

Fred began his teaching career in 1948 at the University of Wisconsin, with design, drawing and jewelry classes. He so enjoyed teaching metal that he focused on that area, and moved to Southern Illinois University in 1959 to start that school's metal department.

From 1960 until retirement, Fred was a valued faculty member at California State University, Northridge, where he developed an outstanding metals program and studio facility. Concurrently, he produced widely exhibited work, created etchings, painted and became a respected authority on the history and worth of original prints. Yet he was never too busy to be loving and attentive to his wife Martha and their children Erik and Lea. Fred believed that his best work just "did itself." Of the many honors his work brought to him, he most prized the student-initiated Distinguished Professor Award he received in 1971 for his superior contributions as a "teacher, counselor and friend."

While not all of Fred's students chose careers in art, they all received his special gifts: high standards of craftsmanship tempered with a deep regard for the individual's point of view. Whether in the classroom or one-on-one, he generously shared his technical knowledge, his humor, his delight in what the world presents to each of us. He is well-remembered and deeply missed.

— Carolyn Novin

A scholarship fund in Fred's honor has been established at California State University, Northridge; please make contributions payable to: CSUN Trust Fund, Memo: Fred Lauritzen Scholarship Fund. Send to: Gerry Johnson, Secretary, 3-D Art Department, Fine Arts 101, CSU Northridge, 18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330.

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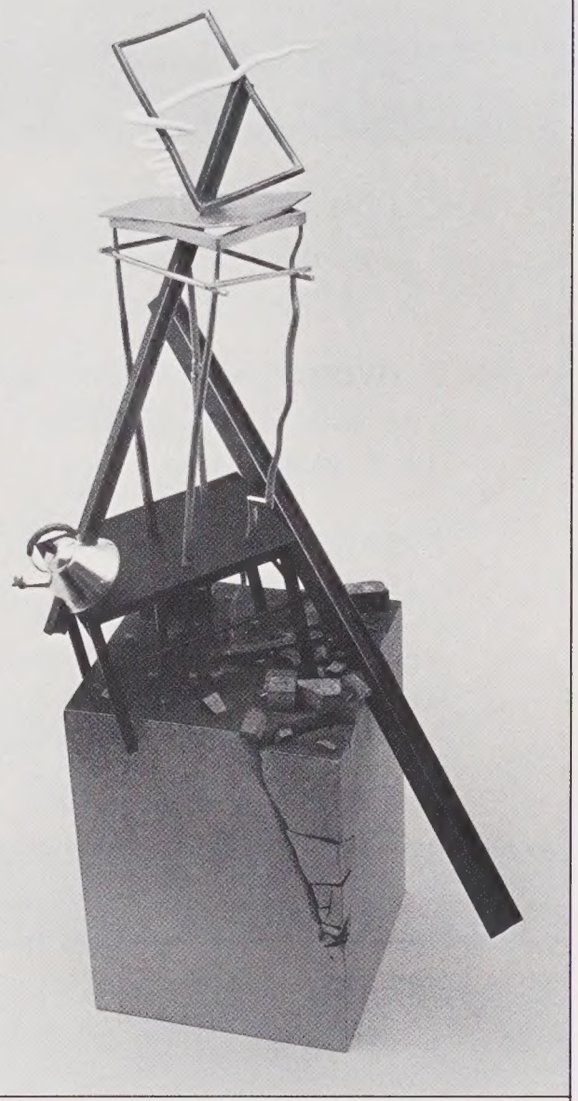

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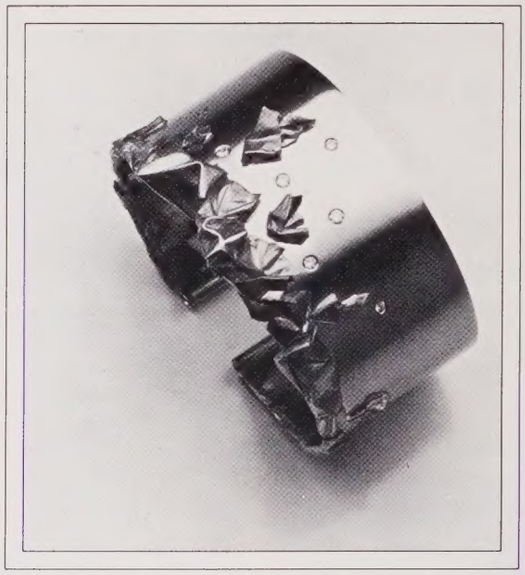

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Art & Technics

by
Curtis K. LaFollette

Franklin Porter
Tea Infuser in three pieces
silver, c. 1925
Photo: Mark Sexton
Courtesy: Essex Institute
Salem, Massachusetts

Franklin Porter was born in 1869. He was a second-generation machinist who aspired to be a silversmith in the grand tradition. He was one of the first students to attend Rhode Island School of Design after its founding in 1877. He also traveled to Europe in 1902 on a quest for ornament. He returned with glass slides and full sketchbooks, but he was not to devote himself full time to silversmithing until he was 55 in 1924. His production over the next 10 years, however, was prodigious. By 1935, he had completed over 7,000 pieces. In 1927, for example, he executed 17 tea makers, 76 bowls, 322 spoons, 48 knives or spreaders and 244 pieces of jewelry, plus various other silver objects, ranging from a cigar box to 27 demitasse sets.

Perhaps his most distinguished design is the *Queen of Siam* tea infuser. This group of tea makers represents the culmination of an evolving design series. The process began in 1923 with order #20, a sketch dates "Sept. 14. 23," and identified as "(Mrs. P.)." It is housed in the manuscript section of the library at the Essex Institute in Salem, Massachusetts. This sketch shows the origin of the infuser, with a layout diagram for a conic segment superimposed on a drawing of a strainer. Notations on the same page inform us that the finished piece was to be executed in 24 B&S gauge sterling with a finished weight of 3 5/20 oz. gross. It was to be 4½ inches high with 2 11/16 OD at the top and 1⅛ inch OD at the bottom. The lower half of the conic segment and the bottom plate were to be perforated with #53 M.T.II holes.

As he continued to produce and sell tea makers, the design evolved largely in response to the requests of his patrons. First, he added a beaker to house the strainer after it had been used, and later a cover to provide still greater refinement. With the addition of the cover, he was able to introduce his pineapple finial (the symbol of hospitality, you know). He came to use this pineapple on so many of his objects that it became synonymous with his work. The first sketch of a pineapple finial appears in a June 3 – 25 entry, as applied to a tea caddy. There is a notation indicating that the pineapple and husk (a transitional element between the finial and lid) required seven hours to execute on Sept. 21.

In addition to adding a lid and beaker to the original strainer, he simplified the design. First, he eliminated both a molding from the handle finial where it joined the wood and a similar molding from the top of the strainer. He reduced the number of holes on the conic segment from 144 located in the lower half to 40 located in the lower quarter. He then changed the configuration of the junction of the handle ferrule and strainer from a bulbous compound curve to a simple curve, which required far less hand forming and, in fact, could be mounted on a mandrel and trued up on his lathe. In its final form, the ferrule grows harmoniously out of the side of the strainer with no visible seams, producing a feeling of organic unity.

The pineapple itself is a real curiosity. Normally, one would expect a casting, but this is not the case. Instead, Porter used a piece of ⅜ inch-diameter sterling rod. The rod was bored through on center with his machine lathe. A smaller piece of sterling wire, the same diameter as the hole, was then inserted about 9/10 of the way through the ⅜ inch rod and soldered in place. A pilot cutter was next used to adapt the remaining hole to the live center on the lathe tailstock, the smaller wire being held in the chuck. At this point, the general shape of the pineapple was turned. Next, the grooves were hand cut with a three square file on a diagonal axis. The finial was removed from the lathe and the leafy crown textured with a matting tool, which Porter had made specifically for this purpose. The hole left by the pilot cutter is an integral part of the leafy crown. A transitional element, which he referred to as a husk, was lightly repoussed sheet silver cut out to suggest a biomorphic form. It and the lid were drilled on center to the same diameter as the hole in the pineapple, and the wire, which had been clamped in the lathe chuck, was inserted through the husk and lid and peaned over to form a rivet.

The tea infuser that I examined was probably produced in 1925. It is part of the permanent collection of the Essex Institute and is typical of the ultimate form to which these little tea makers evolved. It was dubbed Queen of Siam after one was presented to Her Majesty Queen Rampai Pannce and His Majesty the King of Siam while they were being entertained at the Myopia Hunt Club in the early 1930s.

The infuser in the institute's collection is marked "P" as well as "F. Porter" and "STERLING." It bears a presentation engraving "ELBCP." The engraving was probably not done by Porter.

The strainer's bottom is perforated by 24 holes arranged in three concentric circles on lines radiating from the center. The layout lines and circles are faintly discernible. There are five additional rows of holes located in the lower quarter of the strainer. There are eight holes in each line and the holes are staggered. The strainer is 76 mm high. At the top, the outside diameter is 48 mm, while the outside diameter at the bottom is 39 mm. The base disc is recessed 2 mm from the bottom. The handle is rosewood. It is 84 mm long including the ferrule and has a maximum diameter of 12 mm. The ferrule is 14 mm long. The strainer is a straight-sided conic segment with a vertical seam. The seam is not keyed and passes through the center line of the ferrule. The rosewood handle is retained by a single silver rivet. The ferrule is also seamed, with the seam facing down, and slightly flared where it meets the body of the strainer. The transition is seemingly invisible, the fitting so meticulous that even with a optivisor it is difficult to find a trace of the solder joint. Two fine grooves, which appear to have been lathe-turned, decorate the ferrule ½ mm and 1½ mm respectively from the junction of the wood. Wood and metal are so finely fitted that no separation has occurred through use or aging.

The beaker is also seamed without keys. It is necked in slightly at the top and bottom, but this operation is greatly simplified, because the top has a slot cut for the strainer handle and the bottom is cut to form eight scalloped feet, thus interrupting the fundamental structure of the conic segment and facilitating very rapid forming without need of repeated annealing, time consuming pickling and drying.

The beaker is 86 mm high. The base disc is recessed 6 mm, which is ½ mm greater than the maximum depth of the scallops and also the maximum extent of the necking in at the bottom. Similarly, the necking in at the top does not extend below the slot from the strainer handle. The maximum outside diameter, 57 mm, occurs 4 mm below the top. The outside diameter at the bottom is 37 mm.

The lid is 23 mm high. It has a maximum outside diameter of 60 mm. The pineapple is 15 mm high and has a maximum outside diameter of 8 mm. All sheet silver parts appear to be 24 gauge, as indicated in the original sketch. The edge of the lid is decorated with a series of closely spaced diagonal lines, identical in length. This pattern was produced on the lathe with a knurling tool, another significant adaptation from Porter's background as a master machinist.

The infuser blends ancient silversmithing skills with state-of-the-art technology from the Industrial Revolution. There is also a synthesis of functional simplicity and traditional ornament. As a pragmatist working during the darkest days of the Depression, Porter demonstrates a resourcefulness and sense of purpose typical of America's silversmithing heritage.

Curtis K. LaFollette is Professor of Art at Rhode Island College in Providence.

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HELEN SHIRK

Patterns of Growth

Last fall, the National Ornamental Metal Museum in Memphis, Tennessee hosted a retrospective of the work of Helen Shirk. Nearly 70 pieces, from her early silver work in the late 1960s, to her recent patinated copper and brass vessels, confirmed her substantial contribution to the world of metalsmithing.

by Janice Keaffaber

Helen Shirk has spent two decades on a voyage through metal. A series of transitions in scale, approach and materials marks her course. An increasing use of color and design of movement, most evident in her recent work, provides the scope. Her three-dimensional orientation defines the focus.

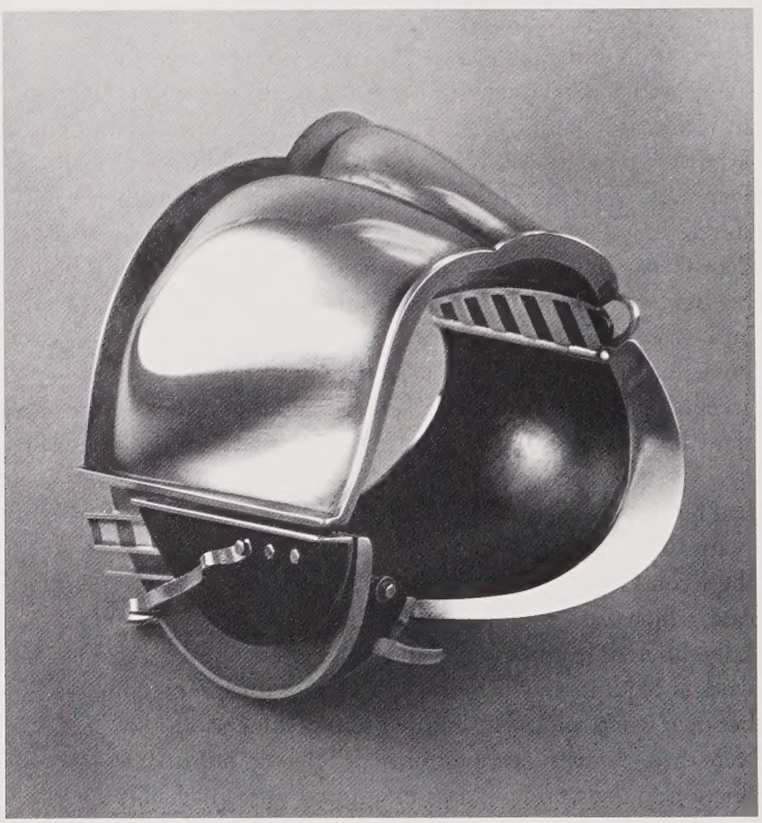
As an undergraduate at Skidmore College in upstate New York, Shirk studied metalsmithing and painting with Earl Pardon. In 1963, with Pardon's encouragement, she obtained a Fulbright Scholarship to study at Kunsthaandvaerskolen in Copenhagen, Denmark. While in Europe, Shirk decided to continue her metal studies in graduate school. She remembers that "there was a student there, a business major, who said, 'You know, they just built a big new art building in Indiana. It must have *something* in it.' So I wrote them. Alma Eikerman sent a really positive response to my letter, because she had also studied in Denmark. Indiana accepted graduate students in January, and that's when I wanted to start. It was a coincidence that I ended up there. I'm forever glad."

When she arrived at Indiana University in 1967, Shirk had been away from the American academic atmosphere for four years. On her first day at Indiana, she got off the elevator on the second floor of the art building, in front of the jewelry display case, which was brimming with pieces conceptually and technically different from anything she had ever encountered. Unlike the work at Skidmore, which dealt primarily with construction, and her own work, which was limited to two dimensions, these pieces were three-dimensional and formed. This was Shirk's introduction to the world of Alma Eikerman. "Alma had an influence

Verge Vessel CV66
copper, patina, gold leaf, prismacolor
23 x 23 x 8", 1990
Photo: Will Gullette

Silver Form II
sterling silver, 4½ x 6½", 1971

Bracelet
silver, 14k gold, copper, acrylic, 2½ x 3", 1978



Black Box
silver, copper, brass, 3 x 2 x 6", 1979

on everybody there," Shirk says. "She was obviously so committed to what she believed in, and had such a passion about it. There was a I.U. style, and when Alma retired, it didn't go away. To me, it had to do with the way parts came together, and with transition done in a three-dimensional way. Because of the three-dimensional approach, the work that came out of I.U. always had a structural, architectural feeling."

At Indiana, Shirk developed her own three-dimensional sense of working metal, an integration of spaces, planes, sculptural components and linear elements that continues to inform her distinctive style. This three-dimensional approach would also prove to be the common thread as she moved from silver holloware and jewelry to silver and titanium brooches, and then to copper and brass vessels.

During the 10 years following graduate school, Shirk started teaching as an assistant professor at Indiana University. In 1975, she began her long-term alliance with Southern California as Professor of Art at San Diego State University where she continued to expand and refine the three-dimensional concepts engendered by Indiana. Her works during this decade were diverse, organic and increasingly complex in form. Formed and fabricated silver took the shape of holloware, hand mirrors, boxes, cups, all technically oriented, with an austere beauty, as if an exercise of the intellect.

In *Lidded Container* (1979), Shirk addressed function with a strong visual form, characteristic of this period. The sculptural quality of the seven-inch form is heightened by a highly polished silver surface. The energy of the form rises to the top, where it flares into a flattened mushroom shape. Smoothly sloping planes on the lid are broken by the addition of seven copper bars, creating pattern on the hard edge. A copper wedge ascends the length of the work, accenting the asymmetrical shape and contrasting with the fluid, rounded surface of the base.

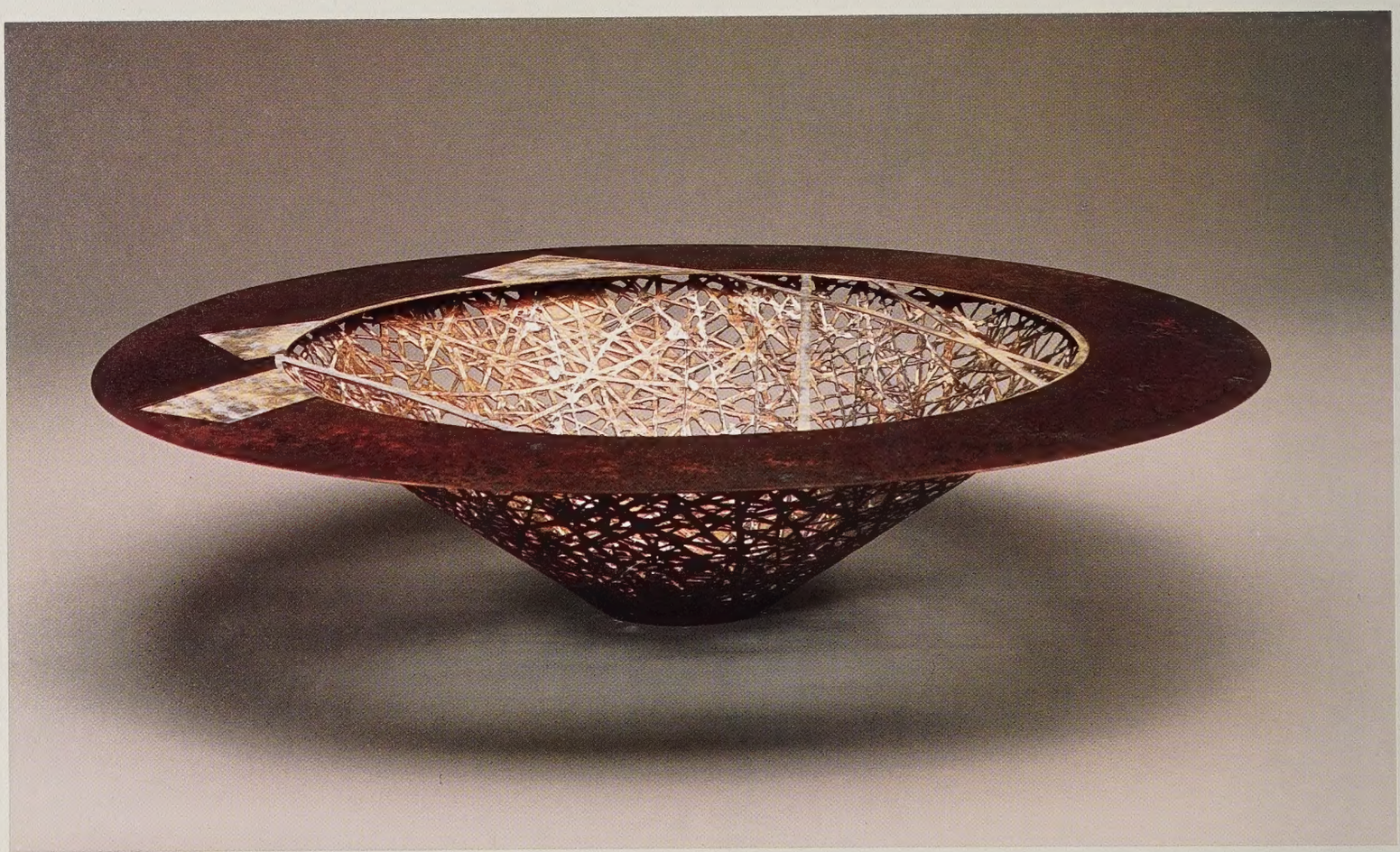
From 1970 to 1980, Shirk went in and out of jewelry, often selecting the bracelet format because it allows freedom to work sculpturally, around the space of the wrist. In contrast to her organic, almost voluptuous holloware forms, Shirk's jewelry tended to be angular and linear, erupting in complex compositions of intersecting planes. Also, her bracelets, collars and pendants began to incorporate new materials: hematite, delrin, onyx, tourmaline, mother-of-pearl.

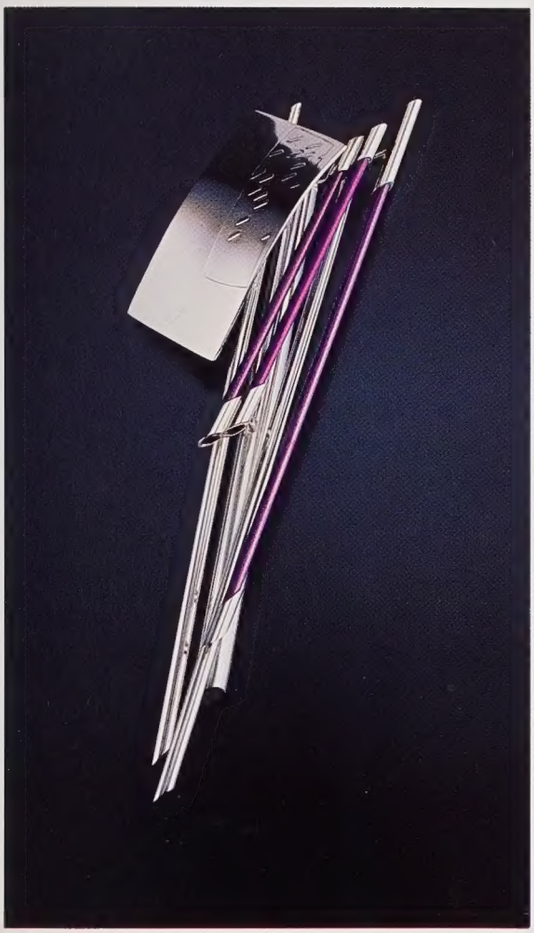
In 1980, Shirk made an unexpected turn in her career, the first in a series of transitions. The catalyst was Edward DeLarge, a British jeweler known for his innovations with titanium, who shared a studio with and would soon marry Shirk. At that time, Shirk's work was elaborate and often belabored, in danger of drifting into excess. "Edward made me look at my work much more critically," she says. "I had reached a kind of outer point where you retrench and go way back to find a nice play between refining and simplifying."

Shirk began to examine what was crucial in each piece, to find the essence of what she wanted to do. She created a silver and copper brooch, titled *SB2* (1980), using half-tubular sections. Although she had experimented with tubular compositions in previous pieces, notably *Black Box* (1979), this brooch was designed with a black-and-white mental image to eliminate extraneous elements. The linear focus of the piece gave it a much simpler form than the sometimes overdone bracelets of the year before. Her work had a freer look, with immediacy obtained through simplification.

Shirk's previous work had been that of a purist, focused on form, to the exclusion of all else. DeLarge led her to color with the lure of titanium. Her brooch *TB1KN* (1981) marked the first of a succession of silver, gold and titanium jewelry pieces that investigated space and linear movement as thin, colored lines of titanium rods determined the cool, spare look of the pieces. In brooch *TB9TRA* (1982), a colored wand of titanium has been coaxed into a bowed arch, balanced by three silver tubes that suggest they have gently fallen in a game of pick-up-sticks. The design is intersected by a fifth rod, which undulates over the piece, extending over the outer edge. The result is a focus on color and line, with a subtly retained three-dimensional quality.

The pieces were tumbled to create a mirrored finish, which heightened the feeling of weightlessness, like a quick flash of light in space. Many of the brooches and a series of bracelets were developed as collages, with gently curved, roller-patterned surface elements, anchored by colored rods suspended over each other. Someone once asked if he could pick up one of the pieces, commenting, "I thought maybe it wasn't all together." "That's just what I wanted people to feel," Shirk says, "that this was just a freeze-frame of something in constant movement, that these were on their way to different positions and this was just one frozen





Left
Fragile Balance Vessel CBV68E
copper, brass, patina, 22 x 22 x 5", 1990
Photo: Will Gullette

Above
Brooch TB5TR
silver, titanium, 5 x 1½", 1981
Collection: University of Texas: El Paso

moment." This series would continue for two years and prove to be her breakthrough into color and movement.

During a sabbatical as artist-in-residence at England's Sir John Cass School of Art in 1983, Shirk decided to return once more to the vessel form. "I had been doing jewelry exclusively for the last four years, and although I liked the work I had done, I felt I had reached the end of a series. The vessel came to mind, in part because this was something I had dealt with in the past, and also because I had been looking at historical and contemporary British ceramics."

The vessel format would allow her to explore a large-scale, three-dimensional arena, free in space. "I began in a simple, direct way, cutting paper," she says. "The paper forms were very contained and symmetrical, characteristics that are not normally part of my vocabulary...I wanted them to be looser and integrate more space, but finally decided that this contained phase was something I had to go through first." The vessel also seemed a more intimate format to her, in part because of the role it has played in man's history, but primarily because it allowed what she calls "a private conversation between me and the object." This is in contrast to jewelry, which she feels involves the wearer as a third party. The wearer injects an impersonal element into the creative process. The making of vessels does not include the demands of an imaginary intruder.

Shirk chose copper and brass for her materials. Patination would provide the color. Michael Rowe had just authored *The Coloring, Bronzing and Patination of Metals,* and Shirk talked with him in London and studied patinated pieces on exhibit at the Crafts Council Gallery. The element of unpredictability in patinated surfaces, and the surprising results she was achieving encouraged her.

In May, 1983, Shirk became a mother. "I was introduced to a life with a child, which makes you a child again. I felt incredibly powerful. It gave me access to things I'd put away a long time ago. Now my work is about things that are closer to me."

Shirk and DeLarge returned to California with their one-month-old son. She had already determined to work in large-scale vessels with patinated copper and brass. She now decided to explore designs that eliminated soldering. Some requirements came from the forms themselves. Soldering softened the hardness of the metal, with the sharp points in her designs especially

Natural Diversity Double Bowl CV58EDB
copper, patina, 18 x 18 x 8", 1989

Partners Vessel CV275
copper, patina, oil pastel, 22 x 9 x 8", 1986

vulnerable. It also chemically restricted the use of some patinas. Shirk's own time limitations, now constrained with an infant and her return to teaching at San Diego State, dictated that she eliminate the extra technical steps that soldering would require. Layering and riveting into three-dimensional forms became the solution.

Her initial vessels were still restrained, articulated in the rather tight, circular format she had devised in England. Then Shirk's work began to soar. Inspired by her return to the desert landscape of Southern California, her vessels evoked the natural vegetation of her environment, spiking to a size of two feet or more. A loosening and widening of the forms, combined with layering, fabrication and patination, added a sophisticated allusion to the expansiveness of the Southwest. *"Support System" Vessel CV285* (1986) revealed superimposed riveted strips of black patinated copper, slightly angled in a horizontal, overlapping pattern. The predominantly black color, plus large scale (7" x 25" x 11"), gave the work a strong emotional impact. Two triangular areas embellished with oil pastel added a punch of color and feeling of solidity to the total shape.

The bird-of-paradise plants in Shirk's yard, sprayed black, then sketched and photographed, also served as a point of departure for this, her most controversial series. Jagged, pointed leaf-shapes sprang forward from the works, creating energy and strength. Softly dappled patinated areas were patterned against sections of mysterious black. The sculptural forms coiled then released, alternately enclosing the layers, then penetrating into space. The central core of the vessels remained concave, as if ready to pull rare moisture from a passing cloud.

"People say the pieces looked very aggressive," Shirk explained. "Some people can't handle pointed things – they're too threatening. They don't have to wear them or sit on them. They just have to look at them. I saw them as being powerful. Now I was back in an exotic desert environment, with vivid flashes of color in the midst of subtle neutrals, with bizarre growing forms, and, of course, space. The variegated patination makes reference to the tonality and repetitive pattern of the desert, as well as to its unpredictability."

Asymmetry gave way to the circle, a simpler, smoother form. Small bowls were sunk in the center of large, flat rims, with oil pastels or prismacolor adding texture to the eye. Pulsing, spun and etched bowls began to appear. Shirk located a company in San Diego that makes automobile hubcaps and contracted with them to spin her forms. *"Fragile Growth" Vessel BV57E* (1989) utilized a waffle-edged shape that was allowed to lose control or "rosebud" during the spinning process. Combined with patina and extensive use of etching, the graceful form appears to ripple in the wind. The structure seems deceptively delicate, a quality important to Shirk: "This is all things that appear to be fragile, but have a tenacity and unseen strength. These are not as fragile as they look."

Shirk's "Double Bowl" series presents a vessel-within-a-vessel. The movement, once caught visually in a freeze-frame of silver and titanium jewelry, now became real, as pieces were physically manipulated to change a view and alter a perception. The first pieces of the series displayed two etched bowls, riveted one within the other, creating a play of light, shadow and line. In the next group, Shirk decided to leave the bowls unattached, offering the viewer an opportunity to see each separately or together. "I wanted to make each distinctive on its own. Yet when they are put together, they form something else."

Her most recent, and still continuing, series "On the Edge" retains implied movement, as multiple planes balance precariously on the rims of the spun, symmetrical bases. Shirk's earlier titanium jewelry pieces triggered an anxiety about touching them, in case they weren't all together. The works in the "On the Edge" series create a hold-your-breath reaction, lest you move too close and launch a domino effect of falling, patinated planes. "Sometimes I think of the work I did before 1983 as being done without access to all parts of myself," Shirk explains. "I had only a soft focus image of what I wanted. It was intellectual, but not pertinent to how I felt. It was not grounded in where I was. My environment now nurtures me."

The aloofness of her early holloware and jewelry has given way to emotion, warmed by color, and played out in juxtapositions. Her work has taken an intimate turn, a personal sense of introspection that makes it even more compelling to watch.

Janice Keaffaber is a writer and enamelist living in San Diego. She is the former editor of the Enamel Guild:West publication, The Vitreous Voice.

Benchmark

Possibly of another time and almost certainly of another place, Harold (Hal) Hasselschwert's enamels entice the imagination with their exuberant colors and patterns, and their delicate constructions. His elegantly enameled panels speak to the viewer an intimate yet exotic language. Although his passing on June 3, 1990 leaves a tremendous void in the world of jewelry and enamels, the loss of this consummate artist, craftsman and teacher is eased by the rich legacy of his art.

Hal made his home with his wife Jean and four children in his native Northwest Ohio, where for 30 years he headed the Jewelry/Enamels program at Bowling Green State University. During his tenure, he was consistently recognized for the excellence of his craft and his dedication to teaching. Over the years, Hal participated in numerous national and international exhibitions and received many prestigious awards. His work has been widely acknowledged, and is included in many public and private collections.

Harold Hasselschwert

Materialization of the Exotic

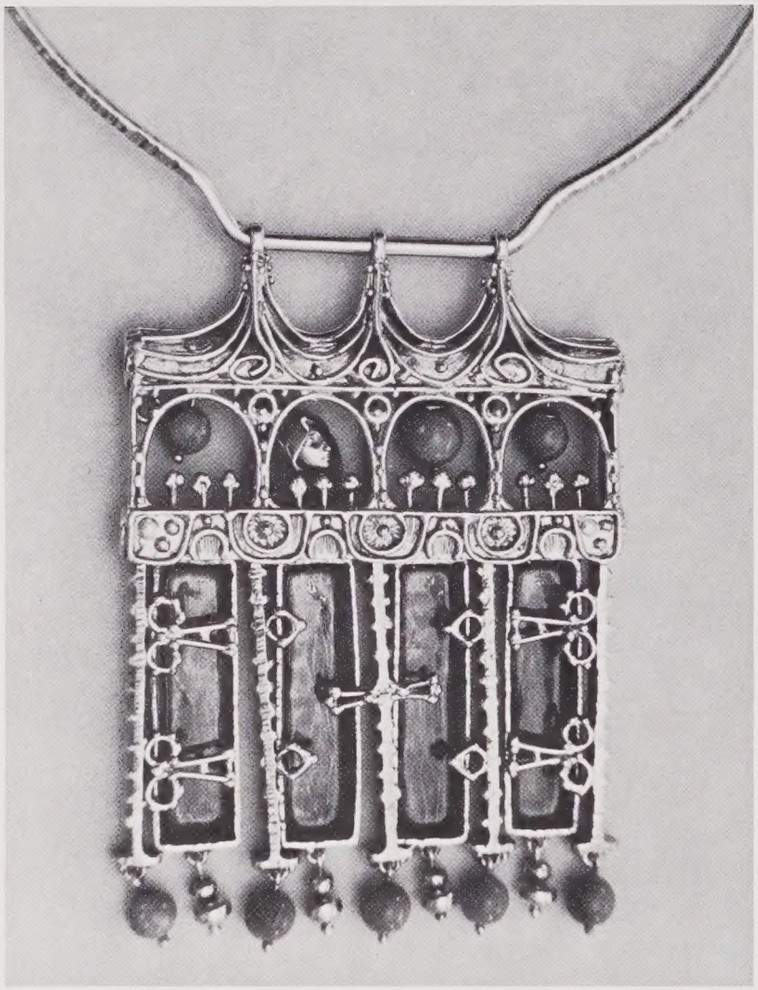
by Tom Madden

Hal Hasselschwert's involvement in enamels began in 1948 when, as a high school student in Toledo, Ohio, he took jewelry/metals as an alternative art course. Although he worked in various media including painting, printmaking and sculpture (and continued to use these media in later years), it was jewelry/enameling that captivated his imagination. For Hal, the rich jewel-like quality of the engraved and enameled surface suggested a timeless journey into both the past and the future.

After military service, Hal returned to the Midwest where he resumed his investigation of jewelry design. Working first at the Cleveland Art Institute, he later attended Bowling Green State University where he earned his B.S. (1958) and M.A. degrees (1959). In 1960, while working as an interim instructor at Bowling Green State University, Hal applied for a Fulbright Scholarship; his intention was to travel to Denmark where he hoped to study Danish holloware techniques. Acknowledging his qualifications but the unavailability of a position in Denmark, the Institute of International Scholar Exchange suggested that he might look instead to India for possible studies. Hal accepted their offer, which allowed him to study for one year at the Government College of Arts and Crafts in Lucknow, India.

< *Untitled Brooch*
engraved champlevé enamel on fine silver, 1989
Photo: Larry Rosenberg

> *Untitled Pendant*
engraved champlevé enamel with 24k gold paillons on fine silver, 1970. Photo: Larry Rosenberg



< *Untitled Pendant Necklace*
cast silver, gilt, turquoise beads,
transparent brown basse-taille enamels, 1977

> *Untitled Pendant Necklace*
cast and fabricated sterling and fine silver
with basse-taille enamel
and white coral beads, 1978

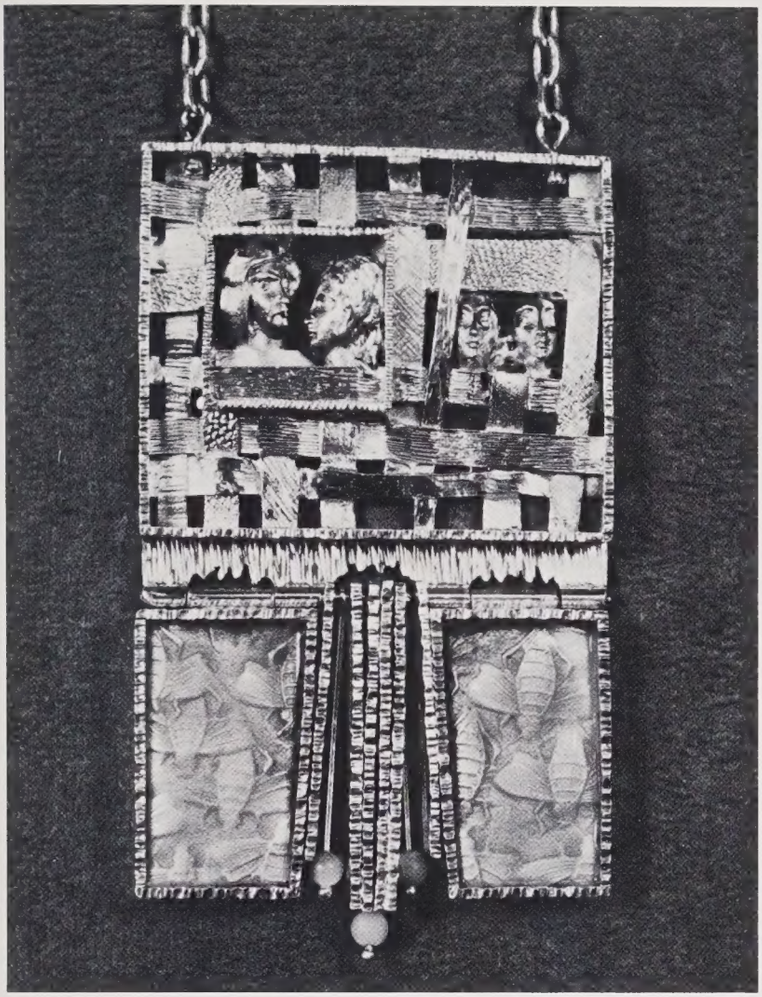
> > *Untitled Pendant*
cast sterling and fine silver with fumed enamels
and lapis beads, 1977

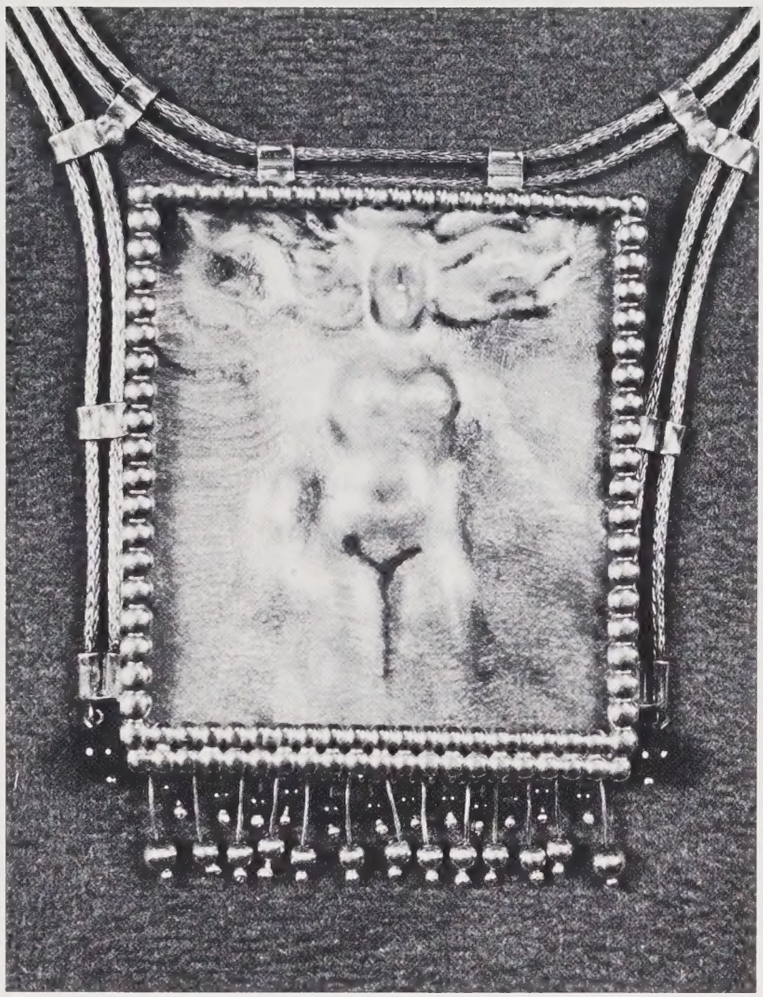
This experience became the turning point in his esthetic. While at Lucknow, Hal studied the Indian traditions of engraving, repoussé, enameling and filigree. His experience with the master craftsmen of Lucknow, and the brilliantly engraved surfaces of Indian copper and silver, fortified his growing passion for ornamentation. In later years, extensive travels to the Far East, Eastern Europe and Asia served to reaffirm his affinity for the decorative.

Above all, Hal was a romantic. His work reflected a fascination with beauty and the exotic. He did not limit his jewelry design to any single style, but rather embraced many different historical sources and artists. Details from Indian, Oriental and Asian cultures, along with elements from the Baroque, Art Nouveau and Expressionism combined to produce uniquely personal objects. He often spoke of his regard for Gustav Klimt and Egon Schiele, particularly for their use of richly patterned surfaces and the expressive quality of their line.

Untitled Pendant from 1970 suggests an unmistakable kinship to the Indian engravings of Lucknow. Hal's use of handtooling and the overall patterning of the surface recalls the highly decorative motifs typical of Indian metalwork. However, the fresh organic flow of his design coupled with the asymmetry of its composition is a notable departure from the formal, symmetrical style characteristic of Indian work. In this piece, Hal combined handtooling and colored enamel with delicate gold overlays to create an object far more expressive than decorative. The interplay of brilliantly cut metal and rich translucent colors creates a tactile depth of surface. Hal felt that this champlevé application of enamel, combined with tooling of the surface, created and greatest saturation of color. In addition, the crisp tactile appearance reaffirmed the balance between metal and inlay.

Another piece making similar use of metal and enamel is *Untitled Brooch* from 1989. Here Hal composed an opulent surface of contrasting patterns. His use of enamel, although meticulous and restricted, lends this piece a fullness of gesture and spontaneity. Its carved surface and geometric patterns suggest connections to Eastern motifs, especially those found in textiles. Although quite intimate in scale, its full rounded form projects a feeling of monumentality. Like some hidden script, its symbols demand closer investigation.





Hal's great love was jewelry; however, very often he left that format to explore the expressive potential of enamel in a more graphic sense. In recent years, this investigation had led to a number of panels and shallow vessels. Comprised of copper, cut and freely shaped, these objects served as ground for vivid paintings in glass. One such panel *Untitled Copper Plate*, from 1983 (see inside front cover), utilized Limoges enamel, with a sgraffitoed foundation and impasto overlays of transparent color that build a surface of vibrant contrast. The warm luster of fluxed copper, edged with red oxide, intensifies the brightly colored patterns. As in his champlevé jewelry, Hal's subject matter is abstract. Vertical rows of brightly patterned stripes seem contained within the overlaid horizontal bands of similar pattern. The resulting panel makes clear reference to the physical, suggesting the tension of tightly bound bolts of fabric, each slightly yielding to the force.

While much of Hal's work addressed abstract imagery, that was by no means the rule. He enjoyed storytelling and enamels/jewelry was a wonderful medium through which to tell a story. Although his interests were broad, Hal most liked classical mythology and fantasy. In these themes, Hal drew inspiration for a number of figurative works throughout his career. Often, as with his untitled pendants from 1977 and 1978, such pieces were expressively modeled in wax and cast in silver to retain their gesture. Later, enamels and precious stones were added to heighten their impact. With lost-wax casting, Hal found a way to obtain the spontaneous forms unapproachable in constructed work. The rich textures of his castings balanced perfectly with the contrasting gloss of enamel.

Hal distinguished himself with his ease and confidence as the head of Jewelry/Metals at Bowling Green State University for 30 years. His patience and insight earned him a well-deserved reputation among students and faculty. He shared his enthusiasm for jewelry and enamels with all who would listen. Regularly, he would display the objects and treasures of his considerable travels for students, and he delighted in the interest and dialogue they provoked. Very often he included these exotic pieces in discussions of esthetics, technique and function in the classroom. Hall challenged his students to look for inspiration everywhere, to take pride in their craft and in the objects they produced.

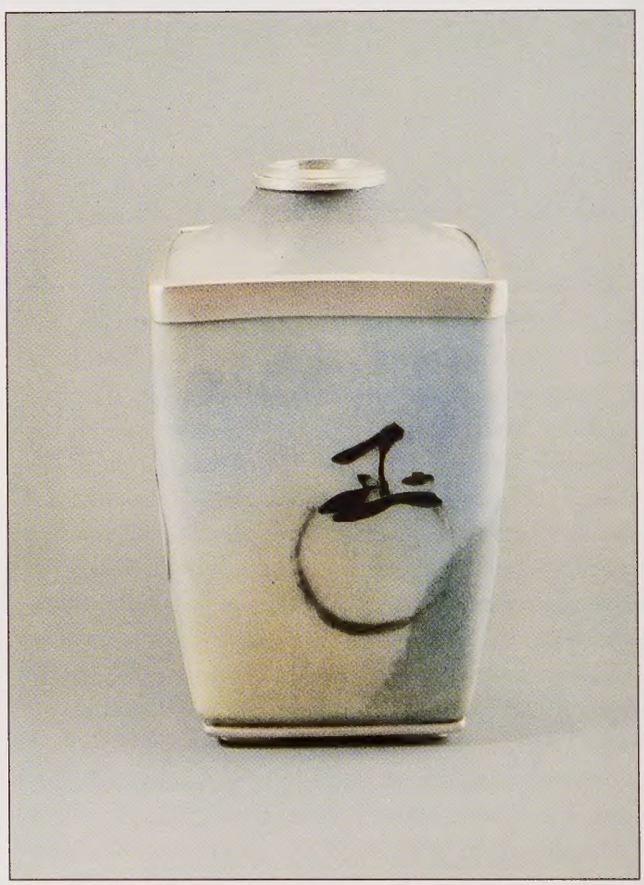
Hal loved the process and "feel" of jewelrymaking along with the directness of the communication with the viewer/wearer. He reveled in the product and the fact that, once completed, the object breathed its own life. Hal made no pretense about changing the world; he simply wanted to create objects that by their mere use and beauty vitalized life. A well-crafted, beautiful object was his aim and the goal that he achieved as an artist.

Tom Madden is a metalsmith and Instructor of Art at Bowling Green State University, Ohio.

Harland Butt
Garden Anagogies

by Ken Chowder

Strictly speaking, the metalworker's contribution to the Japanese tea ceremony is confined primarily to the teakettle. This accoutrement traditionally has been overshadowed in the ceremony, as well as in the history of art, by the ceramic tea bowl, the emblem of tea for most Westerners. However, the essence of tea is Zen, which cannot be confined to a medium nor explained through esthetics. Zen is inextricable from the spirit of the object. This focus features Harlan Butt's efforts to capture the inexpressible aspects of nature through a Japanese sensibility. As one who often makes objects for the tea ceremony, Butt continues in his current work, which was the subject of a solo show at California College of Arts and Crafts, Downtown Oakland Gallery, last spring, with vessels and pictorial wall pieces. These extend his range of Orientally inspired work, searching for a quiet, Zen-like transcendence in the spirit of contemporary metalsmithing.



Familiar setting:
the artist fielding questions after a lecture, the questions slowly dropping toward the lowest common denominator. And now a student had to ask that most dreaded query, "Where do you get the ideas for your work?"

"Well," Harlan Butt said, with one hand rubbing his forehead, "For example, I was walking in the woods in New England, in the spring. I went along a streambed where the skunk cabbage was just about to open up, and there, in the mud, I saw a possum footprint. The print was so fresh, it seemed as if the possum was still there – as if I'd entered a different moment just by seeing it. And the possum and I were both inhabiting that time, when the possum stood there with the mud oozing through its toes. It was a connection between us. We were together in a primordial world, and there was no such thing as civilization, or modernity. Just then, of course, a jet flew overhead. I think that moment is where one of my pieces came from."

Harlan Butt's new series of vessels is called "Garden Anagogies," defined by *Webster* as an "interpretation of a word, passage or text that finds, beyond the literal, allegorical and moral senses, a...spiritual or mystical sense." As such, his quiet vessels and wall pieces are all small searches for the inexpressible in nature. And if the possum story sounds like a koan, it's no wonder: there's more than a little bit of Zen mysticism that Butt brought back from his last few years in Japan.

His *Mu Chi's Koan* refers to a specific work of Asian art: a Chinese brush painting of six persimmons by Mu Chi (Southern Sung period). The reference is quite literal: the painting is faithfully reproduced around the sides of a small vase. But there's a second Asian influence at work here – the Japanese tea ceremony. Butt often makes pieces for use in the tea ceremony, and *Mu Chi's Koan*, with its unassertive, respectful approach, its muted, semitransparent colors and its poetic understatement, shares the sensibilities of tea.

Left

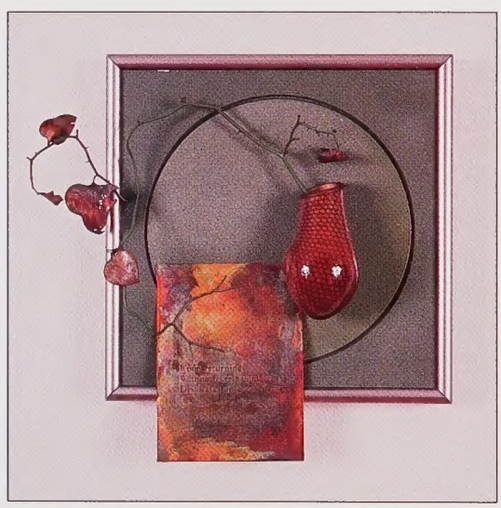
Mu Chi's Koan
copper, enamel, silver, 4 x 4 x 7", 1989

Below, left to right

Garden Anagogy #2
copper, enamel, brass, 10 x 10 x 10", 1988
Photo: Brent Phelps

Ten Bulls in a Quantum Field #3
copper, enamel, hardboard, acrylic
16 x 4 x 15", 1989

Ten Bulls in a Quantum Field #9
copper, enamel, hardboard, acrylic
13 x 5 x 15", 1989



In Butt's work, as in Japan, high art is lavished on and found in small things. Japanese culture has always been willing to look for the inexpressible in the details, the ordinary moments of life. Tea, of course, is one example; Ikebana (flower arrangement) is another. Senei Ikenobo, a master, put it this way: "[Ikebana] does not aim at prettiness of flower, but, at the vitality and the movement of mind resonant with life."[1] Both Butt's *Wisteria Series* and his *Garden Anagoge* series use Ikebana as a starting point: they're flower arrangements without the flowers. Both series are vessels growing their own gardens. In Ikebana, a central element is the transient nature of the flower: it's art of a guaranteed short duration, art that locates itself in the moment. Butt's *Wisteria Series* uses that fleeting quality in a paradoxical fashion – he portrays vines frozen in the midst of search, grabbing at space, just as people (including the artist) twist and turn and grab at ideas to explain the world to themselves. The *Wisteria Series* seems to say: this is what a single moment is like; this is how it will always be.

Where each piece in the *Wisteria Series* slowly grows more spatially complex, as if the vines are steadily growing, entwining both onlooker and artist, the *Garden Anagogy* series is about a different kind of growth: inward. All the pieces are elegant, but the later ones become increasingly simple, serene. The last *Garden Anagogy* is both an end and a beginning, as out of a vessel of immaculate roundness, a single furled leaf slowly prods its way upward.

A series of wall pieces *Ten Bulls in a Quantum Field* is Butt's homage to the *Ten Oxherding Pictures* – a traditional series, painted by many artists, which depicts the 10 stages of enlightenment in Zen Buddhism. *Ten Bulls in a Quantum Field,* like much Zen art, incorporates the natural world – wind and weather, moon and mountain – as partner and pendant to the artist's mental and spiritual life. The series borrows from Chinese landscape painting the habit of doubling its art by incorporating the written word; in this case, each piece has a resident poem. The *Oxherding* series begins with "Seeking the Ox," which is sometimes called "Undiscipline"; it's about the common agitation of life trapped in the ego. In *Ten Bulls in a Quantum Field,* Butt's poem in the first piece begins, "Damn it, there's no reason for this." Slowly, the natural world begins to filter into the perceptions of the artist/narrator. The third picture in the Japanese series is called "First Glimpse of the Ox," and Butt's work reads:

There seems to be
A pulsation
In the darkness
As if my heart
Was a part of...
Is that the moon?

In the *Oxherding* series, stage #8 is called "Both Ox and Self Forgotten"; *Ten Bulls #8* is a smooth round all-absorbed copper half-sphere in bas-relief and its copper "scroll" is completely blank, poemless. But emptiness in Buddhism is affirmation. "*Sunyata* is formless," wrote D.T. Suzuki, "but it is the fountainhead of all possibilities."[2] Nothing, in short, is a place where something can happen. And the final piece in the series, corresponding to the final stage of enlightenment, has a simple metal coffee mug hanging on a nail, beside a scrawled note that reads, "If you need me, I'm in the studio."

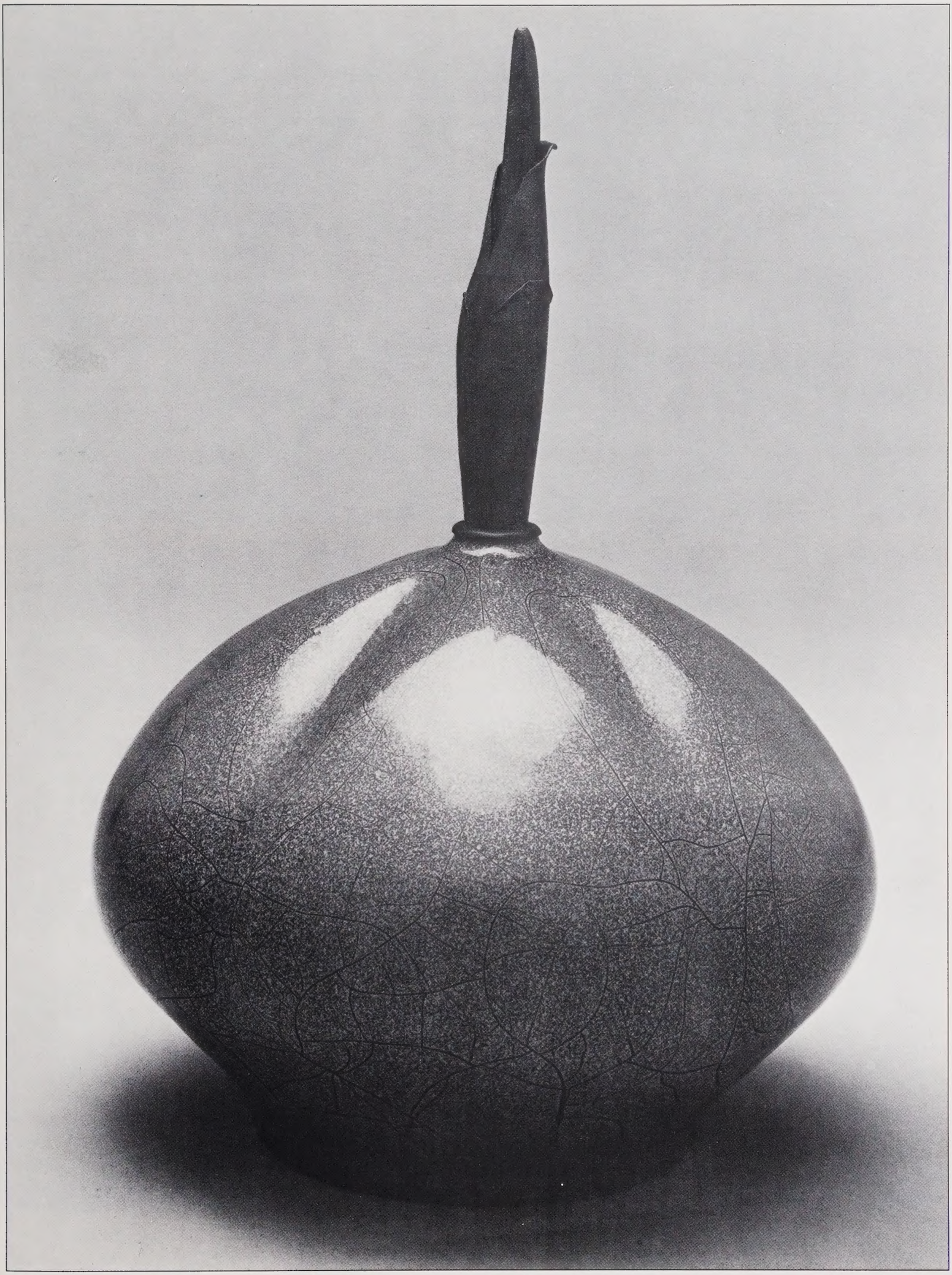
Ken Chowder is a writer living in San Francisco.

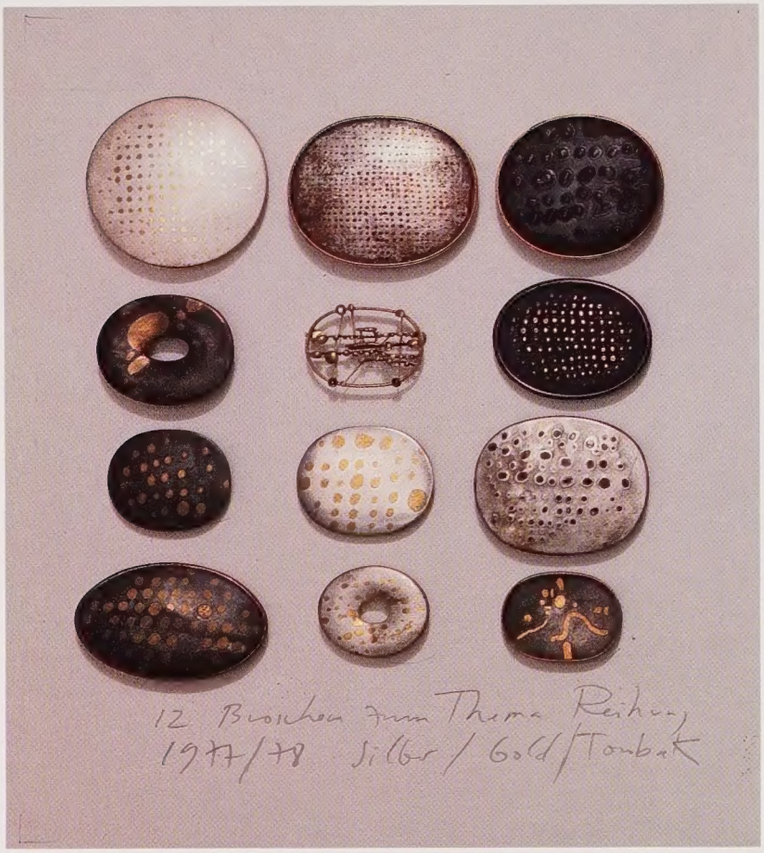
Notes

1. Senei Ikenobo, Best *of Ikebana: Ikenobo School* (Tokyo: Shufunotomo), 1962, p.2.
2. D.T. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), 1973, p.4.

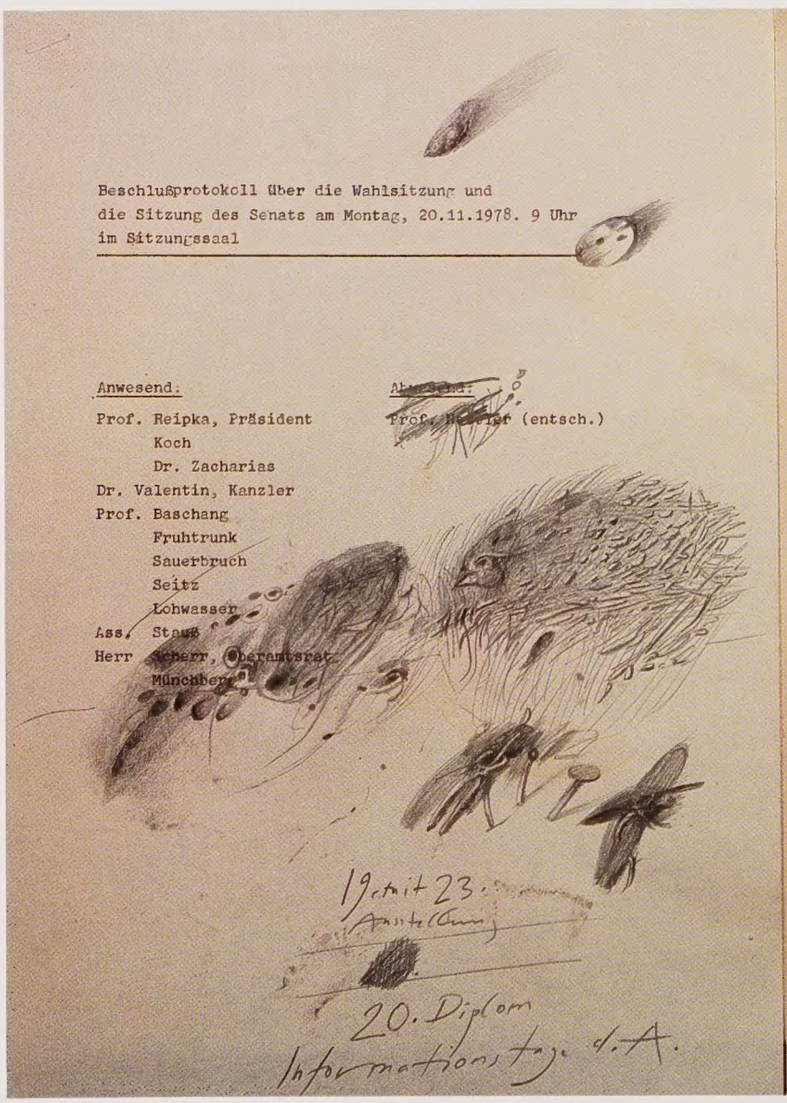
Right

Garden Anagogy #4
copper, enamel, 7 x 7 x 9", 1988
Photo: Brent Phelps



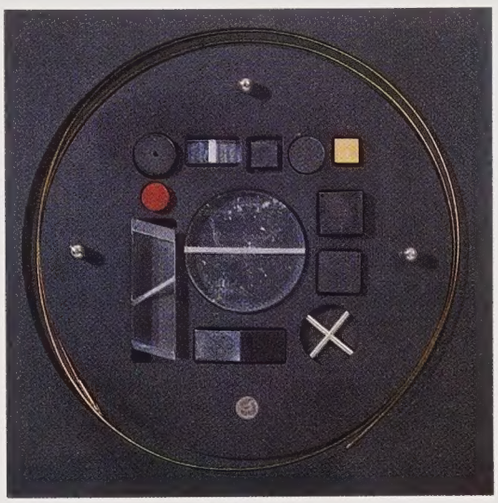

12 Brochen zum Thema Reihung
1977/78 Silber / Gold / Tombak

Halsschmuck
1979
zweiteilig variabel, Gold, Silber, Email, Elfenbein


Beschlußprotokoll über die Wahlsitzung und
die Sitzung des Senats am Montag, 20.11.1978. 9 Uhr
im Sitzungssaal
Anwesend:
Prof. Reipka, Präsident
Koch
Dr. Zacharias
Dr. Valentin, Kanzler
Prof. Baschang
Fruhtrunk
Sauerbruch
Seitz
Lohwasser
Ass. Staus
Herr Scherr, Oberamtsrat
Münchberg
Prof. [illegible] (entsch.)
19 mit 23.
20. Diplom
Informationstag d. A.

Protokoll
1980

From 1988 to 1989, German goldsmith Hermann Jünger was celebrated in his native country with a major retrospective of his work since 1945. More recently, in the spring of 1990, a new series of necklaces by Jünger was the subject of an exhibition at Jewelers'werk Galerie in Washington, D.C., and concurrently Jünger made a tour of the United States. In the following essays, two goldsmiths, Lisa Spiros and Gretchen Raber, both of whom studied in Germany, discuss their views and interpretations of the importance of Jünger's work and thinking in the field of jewelry and goldsmithing.



Hermann Jünger

From the Mind to the Making

by Lisa Spiros

Far left, top
Brooches, gold 1000 (fine gold), gold 750, sterling silver, hematite, enamel, bronze, c. 30 x 36mm, 1977 – 79
Photo: Ernst Jünger

Left, top
Necklace, fine gold, 750 gold, sterling silver, 100 x 70mm, 1979
Photo: Ernst Jünger

Left, bottom
Brooch, fine gold, bronze, hematite, tourmaline, pearls, ivory, laid over drawing, 35 x 85mm, 1980
Photo: Ernst Jünger

This page
Schmuckkasten Series, Type 2, 12 pieces, hematite, silver, gold, rock crystal, mixed materials, 1989
Photo: Ernst Jünger

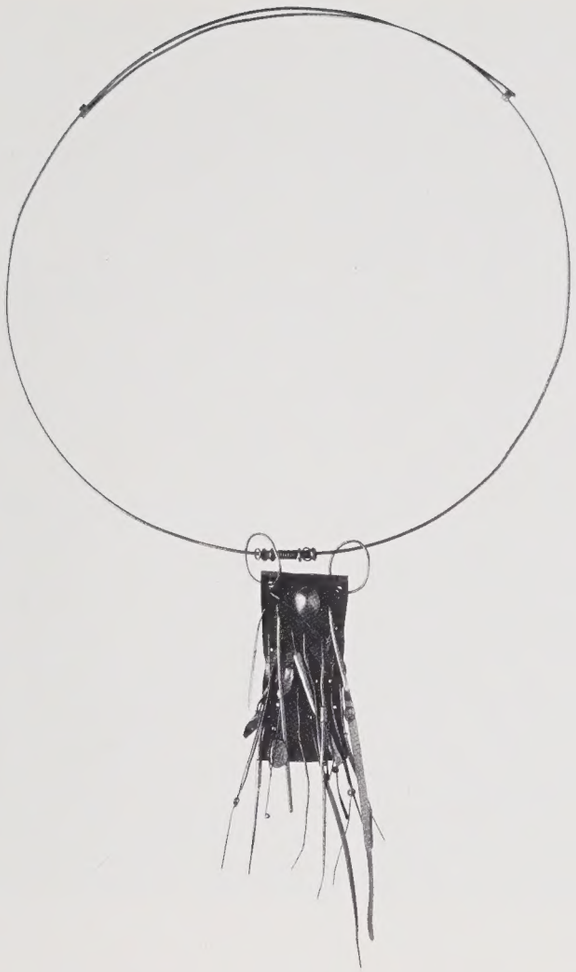
"The original meaning of the goldsmith was to be found in his being both a creator and a craftsman: a man whose activities necessarily united both head and hand into a comprehensive unity. He made his plans, drew his designs, and executed them in metal himself. This was a man who combined the two great human possibilities – Thought and Action – in one creative profession. He was a unified, un-split person, and in this unity he found the meaning and harmony of his existence."[1]

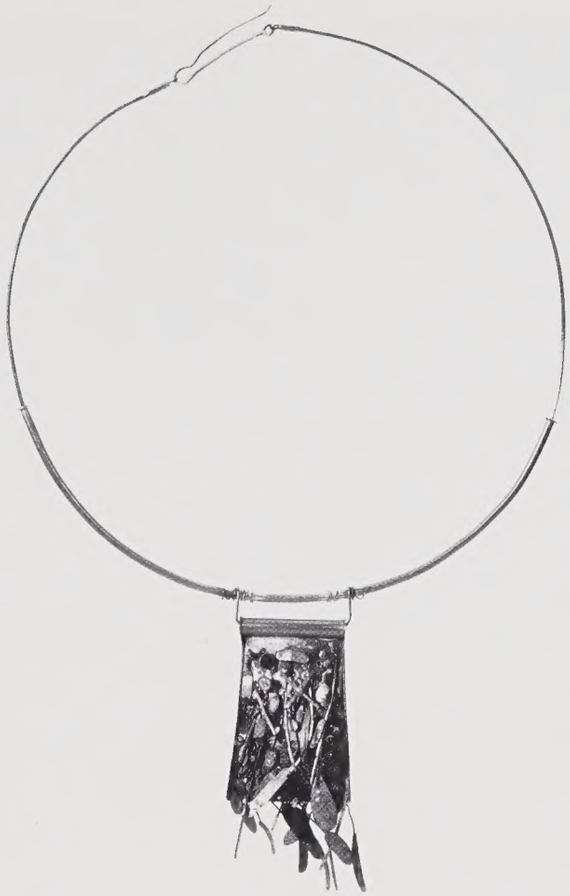
I would like to address the work of Hermann Jünger from the position of having studied with him at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste (Munich Academy of Creative Arts) for two years (1983 – 85). It was a very different experience than I was used to, requiring almost two full semesters of conceptual investigation before being allowed to make a piece of jewelry. An unlearning process, perhaps, of my four-and-a-half years of training as a metalsmith in America, it was, nevertheless, extremely beneficial. Jünger believes that studying goldsmithing at the Academy is not a training, but rather an opportunity for self-development; it is an offer of study as an experience of freedom.[2] I was to collect, compare, contrast, compose and collate anything that would give me a clear idea of what qualities I was looking for in my work – before attempting to make it – a frustrating path to edification that proved invaluable.

Necklaces, fine gold, gold 900 and 750, sterling silver, coral, enamel, ivory, 1977 – 79
Photo: Ernst Jünger

It is itself an education to see Jünger work. For the short time I assisted him in his studio, I gained a tremendous understanding about his approach to making. The attention paid to (what seemed to me) an inconsequential aspect of a piece seemed inconceivable at first. But then I came to realize that the intrinsic value, the preciousness of the piece, was a result of approach, and thus I learned a great respect for nuance. Jünger would stand away, on a chair or across the room, looking at the piece from different angles, only to return to it, adding the final touches in an almost arbitrary manner – using gestures like those of a *Neue Wilder* abstract expressionist.

This is also how Jünger looks at work in general. During his last visit to New York this year, with his wife, Jo, he broadened my appreciation of my neighborhood, both from an architectural as well as a sociological standpoint. Then, as has happened in the past, I was enriched in the same manner by his observations of our trip to The Brooklyn Museum. I had scrutinized the museum's Egyptian collection innumerable times; but this time, when we stopped to rest, Jünger mentioned one very small, yet consequential object, a glass amulet in the form of two fingers from the Nile at Thebes (664 BC–525 BC). The piece was atypical for the period, yet, quite frankly, I had overlooked it. Another observation he made was of a tomb relief from the Nespeqashuty of the same period, the influence of which is found in his own early work, such as the brooch series from 1977–79. There were paint and scratch marks around and over the reliefs (only parts of which were carved completely), pious graffiti in Demotic and Greek left by ancient visitors to the tomb.[3] As Jünger was reading the description, I realized that his work conveys the same feeling of cultural imprints as did the relief. His quest is knowing for what reason? by whom? at which time? for what means and to which end? a piece was made, not whether it solely pleased him esthetically. Underlying his apprehension is an insatiable desire to assimilate the cultural and social beliefs of the makers and users, regardless of what he is looking at.





In the context of his own work, Jünger describes the influence of growing up in a city (Hanau, Germany) with a very old tradition of gold and silversmithing. In 1947, he attended the Staatiche Zeichenakademie Hanau (Drawing Academy, Hanau), where he studied painting and drawing. Because of Hanau's heritage, even the fine art disciplines at the academy related to goldsmithing.

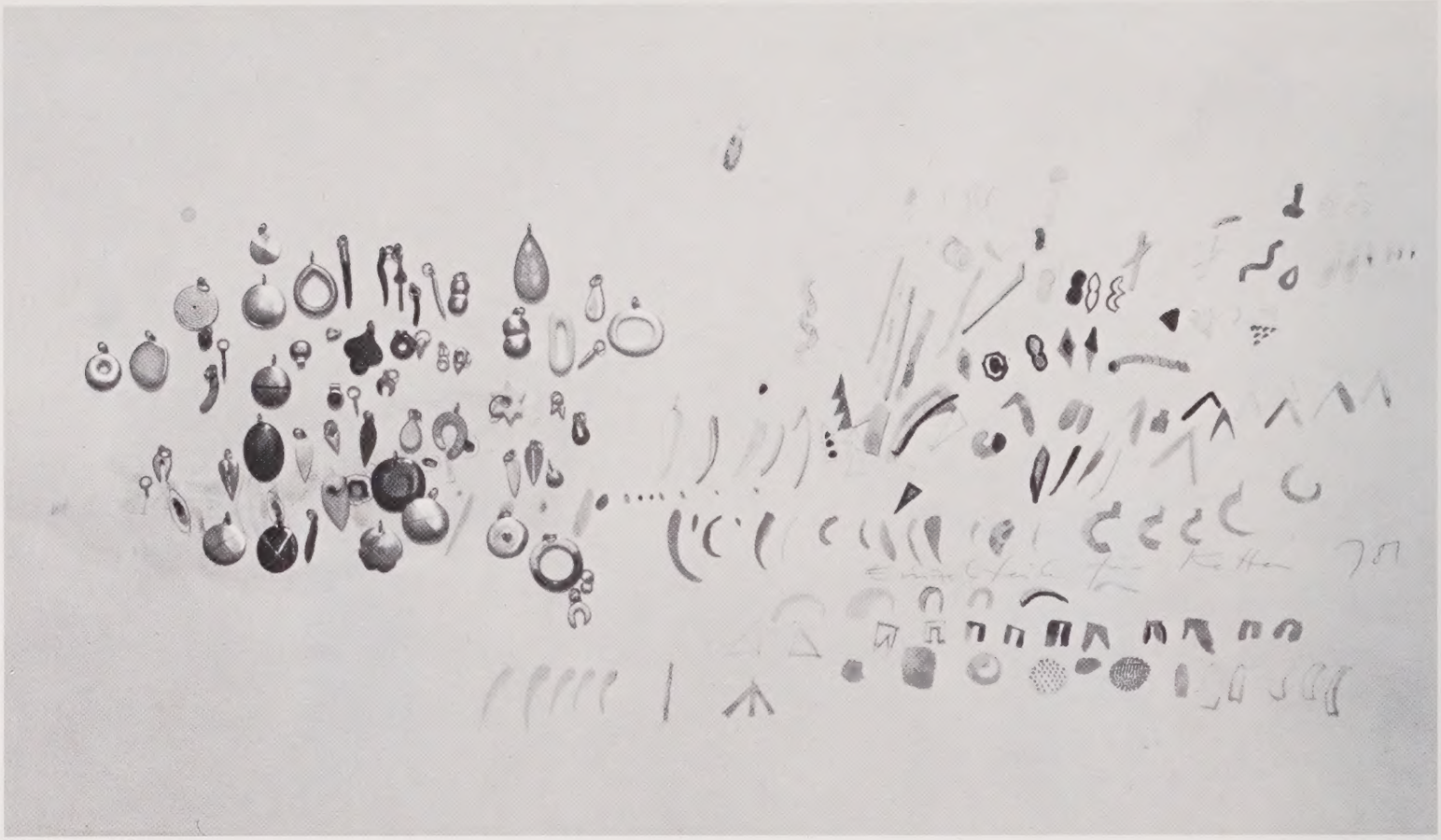
This was a very difficult time in postwar Germany, especially for someone trying to pursue goldsmithing. Classes were held in the basement of a bombed-out building. There were no tools, no workshops, no materials...nothing but devastation. However, Jünger, still only 19 years old, could see something positive in this – he was then able to concentrate more on painting and drawing. "We went out into the ruins and started making drawings from them. I didn't work in metal, there was none...Then we started to dig out the tools from the ruins and copper from the broken down houses."[4]

Although the students could now begin raising copper bowls, etc., Jünger did not consider this serious goldsmith's training. He went to study with Franz Rickert at the Akademie den Bildenden Künste (The Academy of Creative Arts) at Munich, where Jünger himself began teaching in 1972. It was under Rickert that Jünger realized his real potential in painting, which cast doubt about continuing to be a goldsmith.

"Goldsmithing for me is very closely connected to drawing and painting (for me still), the first possibility to express something that I like to do."[5]

Jünger explains that the rudimentary reason for continuing as a goldsmith was safety, not commercial safety, but safety in the boundaries of the craft. When asked if this was more a limitation, he answered: "For me, I think it was a help, because the size is limited by the necessity of wearability. It has to be in connection to the body...I'm interested in a small format. Historically, things can be concentrated into a very small size and in spite of this be very powerful."[6]

In fact, the strength of Jünger's work comes from his ability to translate with great articulation the emotion and spontaneity from his drawings into his jewelry. He uses them as "maps" to achieve the compression he finds synonymous with jewelry's success. The signature style of his drawings evolves seamlessly from paper to metal, with little apparent hindrance in the shift of materials. Maintaining the mood of the drawing in a jewelry piece through its laborious processes is very difficult; but this difference never becomes evident in the finished piece. He explains that there are unknowns; because of all the procedures, you can't always control your progress, so it's still spontaneous.



Jünger's impetuous transcriptions are evident in his capriciously laid charm pendants positioned over loosely gestured watercolors. This jewelry is born from a chaotic conflux of minutiae that are precise dislodgements from the metals' fossil-like surface, pitted as if from decay. Here the boundaries of fine art and craft are overcome, not from the ability to translate one to the other, but because they elicit the same response. The medium is handled with emphasis on emotion, not technique. Jünger never considered himself a craftsman; this was not his concern, no pedantics. "Perfection is the opposite of the intention in my work."[7] The objective in his work is to discover a certain quality, for instance, of that found in ancient pieces, enduring and lasting.

Jünger cites the Romanesque period as an example. He tells of a particular piece, in high-karat gold and enamel, that had been restored in the Erfurt Museum, East Germany. Except for the damaged portion, it consisted of geometric forms with a freely crafted imperfect circle. The man commissioned to repair it restored it to a perfect circle. The result was completely different, dead and sterile. Jünger explains that "maybe this is a condition of the old pieces, that they are not perfect, and while some jewelry needs an unbelievable amount of precision to exist, i.e., that of Friedrich Becker, there is another category of jewelry that starts to live because it doesn't have this perfection – what makes one piece live makes another die."[8]

As a pastiche of African motifs, Jünger's gold necklaces exemplify his "unfinished" program. The elements in the necklace are removable, allowing the wearer to compose his own medly of forms. The options are numerous: punched gold discs, ivory and enameled charms, gilded spicula and wires give a feeling of tribalism, where arrangment signals culture and distinction.

In curious contrast to his jewelry are Jünger's objects. Clean, stark lines circumscribe these pure geometric forms. Virtually no surface treatments are applied to the minimal forms, reminiscent of Brancusi's sculpture or industrial routers. The painterly qualities that Jünger incorporates so successfully in his jewelry do not find their way into the freestanding objects. He prefers to keep these simple and concentrate on their forms alone. Jünger suggests that in medieval times and later, in the Baroque period, people found ways to integrate color and ornamentation but he can't cite an example of contemporary work that is similarly successful. "Form follows function is much more convincing than trying to make a conversation piece in regard to objects."[9]

"For Jünger, the formulation of his real function would be creating art for the human body. His work in the form of detached, free objects does not assume the full importance it always has when it is intimately related to a human being. It is exactly this field of tension between beautifully shaped objects and their function as signs worn on the body that Jünger searches for his art solutions."[10]

Left
Variable Pendants, gold, silver, bronze, lapis lazuli, ivory, moonstone, enamel, opal, ruby, laid over drawing, 1981
Photo: Ernst Jünger

This page
Pendant Series, hematite, slate, bronze, gold gilded and overlay, glass, 1983
Photo: Ernst Jünger

Notes

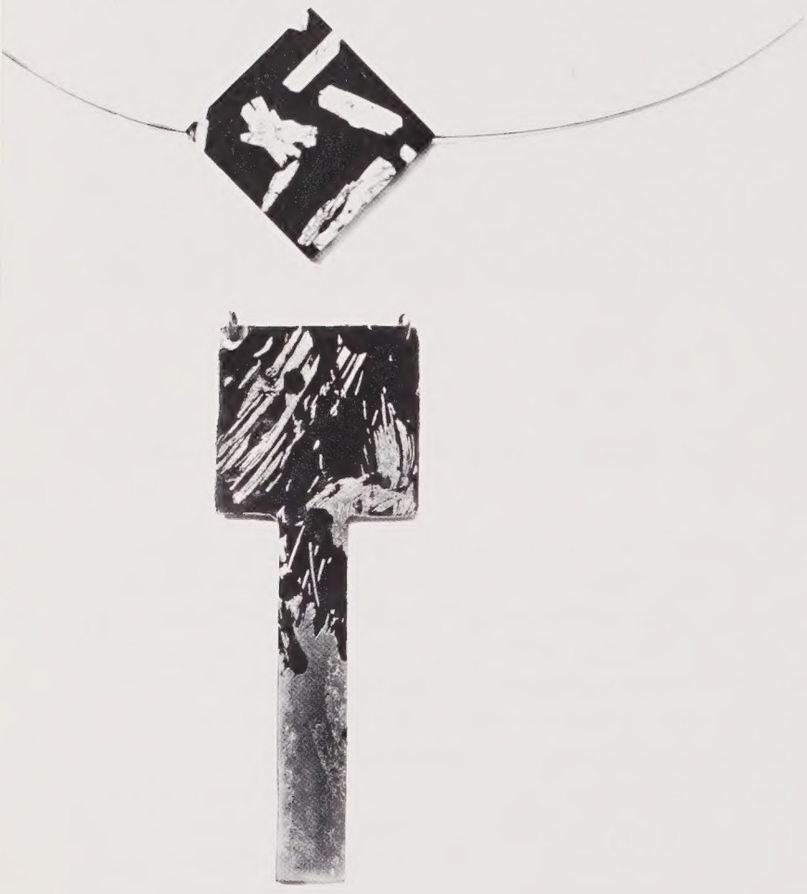
1. Hermann Jünger, 1979, quoted in "A Goldsmith's World," *Art Aurea*, 1/89, p. 58.
2. "The Goldsmithing Class at the Munich Academy of Creative Arts," *Art Aurea*, 1988.
3. From the description of the Nespeqashuty Tomb at The Brooklyn Museum.
4. From an interview with Lisa Spiros, August 5, 1988, Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Munich (translated by Lisa Spiros).
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Jewellery as a Sign Language: The Work of Hermann Jünger*, catalog of the exhibition at Galerie am Graben, Vienna, Austria, October 12, 1987 – November 7, 1987, p. 83.

Lisa Spiros is a jeweler living in New York. She is an instructor and coordinator of the metals program at the Parsons School of Design in New York City.

Hermann Jünger

Complex Simplicity

by Gretchen Raber



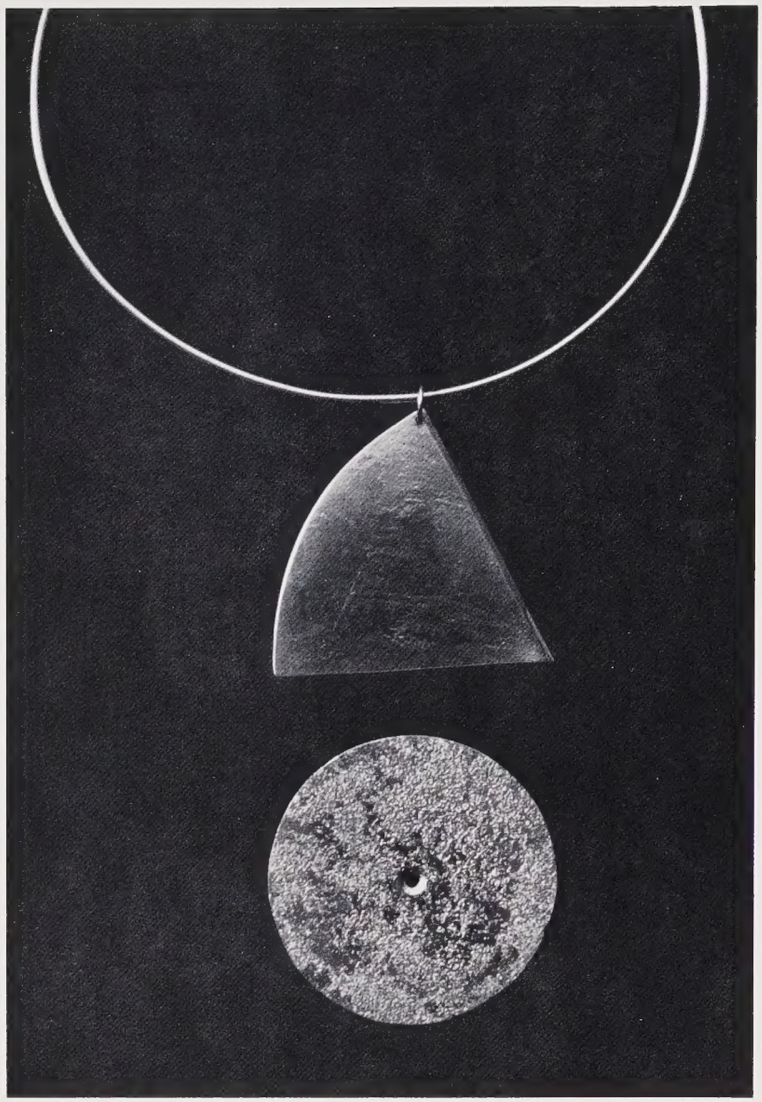
Jewelry for Hermann Jünger has always been an art of certain scale. The term miniature, I believe, is overused and inaccurate, since, in fact, jewelry art is created in visual proportions that correspond to the artistic idea. As Jünger would say, "ein Zehntel," or tenth of a millimeter – this exacting refinement that affords no translation in scale can significantly alter the way an artist proceeds from his initial esthetic proposition. Over the last 40 years, Jünger has remained true to this principle, as he transforms his two-dimensional drawings and paintings into three-dimensional metal forms. From his earlier necklaces onwards, he has followed a visual unity in his work, employing collage or collected forms with the barest interruption of technical necessity. Light, kinetic, visually refined, tactile forms operate in the most reduced context as the metalwork seems to flow effortlessly from the ideas in the drawings.

Jünger's adventure is in drawing. His exploration and intellectualism is in calligraphic notation. In the transformation from drawing to metalwork, he is not constrained. There is the confidence that comes from decades of refining one's thoughts. Jünger's entire body of work is a continuum of design and art in a marriage of personal statement and technology. Specifically, in his latest exhibit at Jewelers'werk Galerie, he has achieved a purity of expression in his *Schmuckkasten Series.* These extraordinary pieces, composites of his pendant series, are minimalist in the Rothko manner, ever seeking to eliminate the extraneous or distracting. In Jünger's case, they are personal explorations of common forms that he metamorphoses into specific shapes and exact proportions that become his alone.

Two Pendants
fine gold, jasper, steel, 1990
Photo: Ernst Jünger

In his jewelry, Jünger invests a simplicity or universality intended to facilitate the jewelry's visual fusion with the wearer. The jewelry is intended to become integral with the individual's persona. What it says is both simple and complex. One's initial reaction might be, "Oh, that's a familiar form." However, closer observation reveals complexity and sophistication. Just as a painter or poet would not detach or excerpt an isolated portion of a work, Jünger considers the body his format. His jewelry is concerned with a point on the whole. A place, a size, a color, a form are all considered reflective personal signs. His intention is in opposition to a vast number of contemporary metal artists. Most frequently, in the frenzy to prove: 1) artistic merit, 2) artistic signature, 3) settle art v. craft confrontations, 4) innovation, metal artists create huge, technological, pictorial essays and call them jewelry or body ornament. For the most part, they can only be worn like the crown jewels, briefly, uncomfortably and conspicuously. On the other hand, Jünger's most recent jewelry, when worn, becomes part of the wearer, a statement that integrates. It does not have so much to say that it overwhelms the eye. His work coordinates powerfully in the proportions of the golden mean, in which his is the accent. Jünger's jewelry is a point on the body, as Jünger says, "the dot on the 'i'," a necessary part of every day.

Although Jünger is not essentially interested in the technical part of goldsmithing, his achievements would not have been as easily realized without the ability and interest in solving the technical problems that would otherwise interfere with his esthetic principles. For instance, in his previous pendant series, the connecting jump-ring was a necessity to tie the neckwire and the pendant together. With the application of the new Niessing wire "thread," the strength and size of the "thread" enables Jünger to eliminate the distracting connection. The "thread" passes through the hole in his pendant beads. Ingeniously, his spring-loaded tube clasp solves the problem of inserting the "beads" over the clasp, because the diameter of the clasp is so reduced. Visually, it is purified. The "thread" allows him to group his collection of related forms in a presentation box. The various sophisticated shapes, natural stones and colors of metal are grouped in a matt black container. The idea of this container was influenced by Japanese packaging, where all components come together into one idea. The box configures the work when not worn or when part is worn. Its composition is fine, particle-resin board that has been machine-routed by computer program. It is a marvelous industrial contrast to the precious parts it houses. The whole is a graphic display pushing up through the third dimension. Each piece is assigned as the whole is considered. Jünger feels that the *Schmuckkasten Series* opens up new esthetic possibilities. He sees in each millimeter a new road to explore.

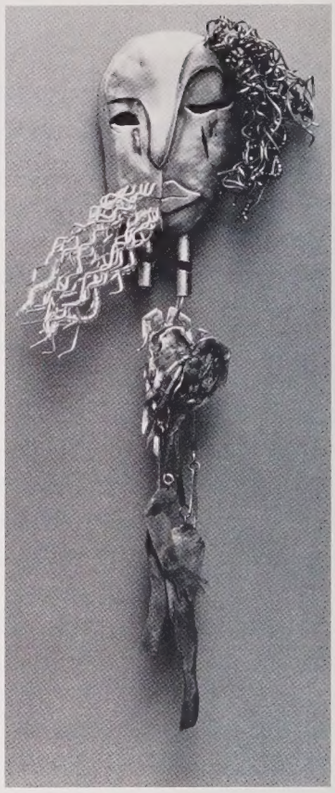


Two Pendants, gold, 1990
Photo: Ernst Jünger

Gretchen Raber is a goldsmith and designer/manufacturer of architectural metalwork in Alexandria, VA.

Reviews

No, Daddy! pin, silver, copper, 14k gold, glass bead, 2¼ x 2 x ¼", 1989
Photo: Richard Nicol



David & I Remember pin/tie tack, silver, copper, 14k gold, glass beads, 5 x 3 x ½", 1990. Photo: Richard Nicol

Elizabeth Chenoweth Palmer

Artworks Gallery, Seattle, WA
February 17 – March 31, 1990

by Keith A. Lewis

Elizabeth Palmer has for years been translating the strange, honest logic of children's drawings into metal. The making of these pieces, and her familiarity with the disconcerting directness of children, has shaped her vocabulary of form and content. The work in this show is about three things; the harm that we do (physical, psychic, spiritual) to one another, the burden of pain and alienation that we carry about with us after receiving (or causing) such harm and the flight of the spirit that allows us to discard those burdens, keeping only the vision and strength that the pain has given us. For Palmer the abuse of children is both a horrible reality and the unavoidable metaphor for the cruelties and injuries of the adult world. Several pieces in the show, ostensibly about child abuse, achieve a depth of feeling and emotional commitment rarely achieved (or attempted) in metal. The pieces evoke, in some mysterious way, both the *event* of child molestation and the fabric of menace that surrounds an abused person, child or adult.

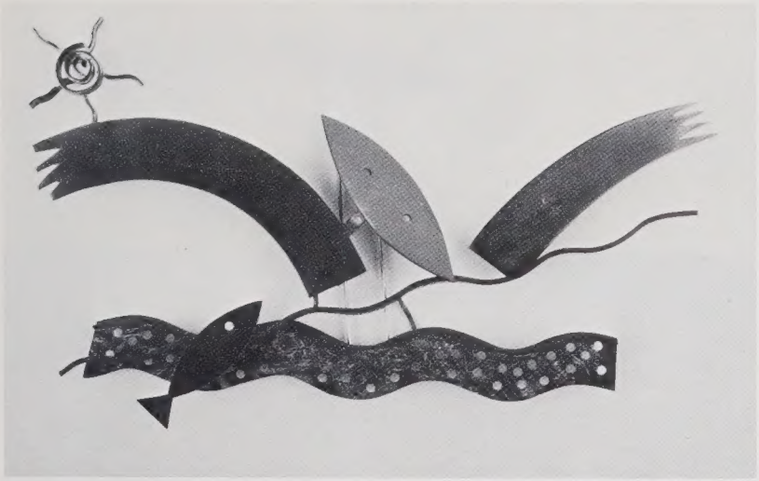
No Daddy serves as one of the thematic and emotional poles of the show. A small figure, with huge head and red bead eye cries a long stream of tears. From his/her shoulders sprout tiny vestigial golden wings – evocative of the limbs of a thalidomide child. Below the body dangles a pair of twisted fragile wren's legs. The face is turned up towards a looming, cloudlike form, from which emerges a hand holding a penis. Stamped deeply, three times, across the child's face and body is "No Daddy." The aura of abuse and exploitation is palpable, and the piece rivets the viewer's eye, forcing a confrontation with usually ignored pain. This piece, which was once characterized as "too disturbing" by a gallery owner, has prompted tears and sincere thanks in some, discomfort and a sense of inappropriateness in others. The wearing of this piece entails deep emotional commitment and the wearer would truly have to share Palmer's vision and be willing to take it out into the world.

From these pieces about hurt, Palmer moves into pieces that center around the memory of pain and the legacy of abuse. *David and I Remember* grew from Palmer's friendship with David Duhaime, who is serving a life sentence without parole for the murder of a young woman 11 years ago. Palmer believes that Victoria, the woman killed, has become enmeshed in David's waking and sleeping life. Hence the duality represented in *David and I Remember*: the Janus-like features, the shreds of two hearts tangled together, the dangling limbs tied to the heart, the stream of justification or explanation or remorse emanating from the figure's mouth. Victoria's death, tragic and senseless, has been the catalyst through which David, himself a victim of childhood abuse, has remade himself. His drive to learn and grow – to transcend his actions despite his certain lifelong imprisonment – seems to Palmer to typify "the awe and wonderment of the human spirit." This is dangerous ground, but Palmer never asks for pity, she only suggests that flowers can grow in the most unpromising soil. Other pieces also address confinement and dreaming, freedom and attainment. Despite her use of occasionally pat imagery – the broken heart, the bars of a cage – Palmer evokes scenes of resilience and bravery.

At the other pole of the show is *Blessings of the Earth on the Sow*, which was inspired by a Galway Kinnel poem that reads, in part, "The bud stands for all things...for everything flowers, from within, of self-blessing." A lumpish and utilitarian sow somehow transforms herself before us, as her skin is stripped back to reveal a brilliant pink-and-lemon interior. From an often-shattered but still shining heart, highlighted by a pointing editorial finger, rises a delicate dried rosebud. Exuberant stars swirl about, echoing and joining the jaunty curl of tail. Human figures suckle from bright magenta teats and below it all hangs a placard telling us that, "Sometimes it is necessary to remind a thing of its beauty."

This apotheosis, this reminder of self-worth and loveliness – despite memories of derision and abuse – is the essence of Palmer's work. It's a sweet essence, especially in our metalsmith's world safe (and salable) design. In that world, those who imagine themselves audacious embrace the newest technique, thus adding to a toolbox that is used to do...what? Used to say...what? That makes us feel...what? None of this will satisfy Palmer; quietly and with serene integrity, she is showing what demands can be made of herself, of metal and of the wearers of jewelry.

Keith A. Lewis is a metalsmith chemist and gay/AIDS activist living in Kent, OH.



Ramon Puig Cuyas, *The Swimmer with the Sun brooch*, oxidized and painted sterling silver, 13 x 8cm, 1989. Photo: Guy Beaupre

Hola Barcelona!

Galerie Jocelyne Gobeil, Montreal, Canada
March 3 – April 7, 1990

by Luc Pilon

Anna Font, *Done (Woman)* brooch, brass, pencil on paper, gold leaf, 15 x 7 x 2cm, 1989. Photo: Guy Beaupre

Highlighting the most recent movements in contemporary jewelry from Barcelona, this group exhibition was both provoking and fascinating. All of the work has a very clear or loose approach that carries with it a free spirit of creativity. This characteristic spirit results from a balance between the rational or controlled approach to making and the powerful intuitive feeling of conception in each artist's work. The sculptural quality was evident in the scale of the works, which function both as wearable jewelry and as objects independent from the body. This quality is also apparent through approach to material, orchestrated to expose creative means rather than material value. It was delightful to note the total absence of both gold and stones.

Barcelona discerns itself as the only center for contemporary art jewelry in Spain and is home to the Escola Massana, where Ramon Puig Cuyas heads the department of jewelry. All of the artists in this show at one time either taught or studied at this school. The resultant small community of jewelers nevertheless manages to keep a distinct individuality among its members. Seven of the Catalan artists were included in this show: Ramon Puig Cuyas (also the subject of a solo show at the Helen Drutt Gallery in New York this past spring), Xavier Domenech, Carme Roher, Virginia Bekla, Paul David McClure, Anna Font and Marta Breis. These jewelers form a part of a new avant-garde movement that continues to question, search and redefine the nature of jewelry.

Puig Cuyas navigates us through images of the sea (fish, waves, mermaids) to create his own mythical world. We recognize his irony, poetic and sensual intentions while he fabricates a story in impeccable collage form. With the application of primary colors, he brings us towards a warm climate at the edge of the sea. As *The Swimmer with the Sun* demonstrates, his work embodies the enchanting characteristics of the Mediterranean artist.

More than serving a single decorative function, Domenech's architecturally inspired works are wearable minisculptures. It seems as though issues of decay and pollution are raised as we recognize images of scaffolding in silver around rusted iron forms. Adorning the human body, they are structures that form a dependency with the figure. He creates a balanced whole between simplicity and industrialism.

Also taking architecture as a departure in her self-expression, Roher presented both sculpture and jewelry. Ancient monuments, amphitheaters and ruins seem to be the source of her inspiration in pieces that although relating spatially to the body are not wearable. There is a sense of the past in her patinated, crudely finished surfaces, like abandoned places or discarded objects.

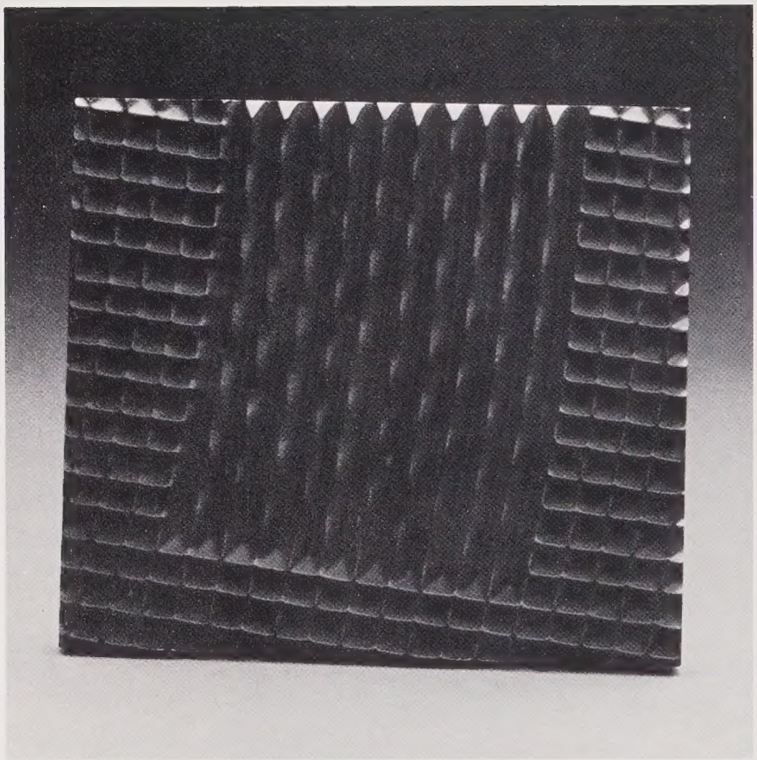
Beida's paintings on laminated cardboard offer a three-dimensional portrait of a unique Spanish experience. The bracelet *A Por el Toro* depicts a scene of a Spanish bullfight like an expressive painting. Spontaneity in its rawest form is evident in a neckpiece called *Reunion de Amigos*, a plastic box containing a cardboard painting and a moth ball hung by a steel cable. Her work and her process were the most intuitive and spontaneous of this group.

The sentiment to be "playfully dangerous" of McClure, a Canadian who studied and worked in Barcelona, draws the admirer as a toy attracts a child; there is the desire to touch and explore. However, underlying this, one discovers a second skin. One sees images of glass shattering, spikes piercing and a saw cutting. There is a juxtaposition of innocence and reality, each fighting for equal value.

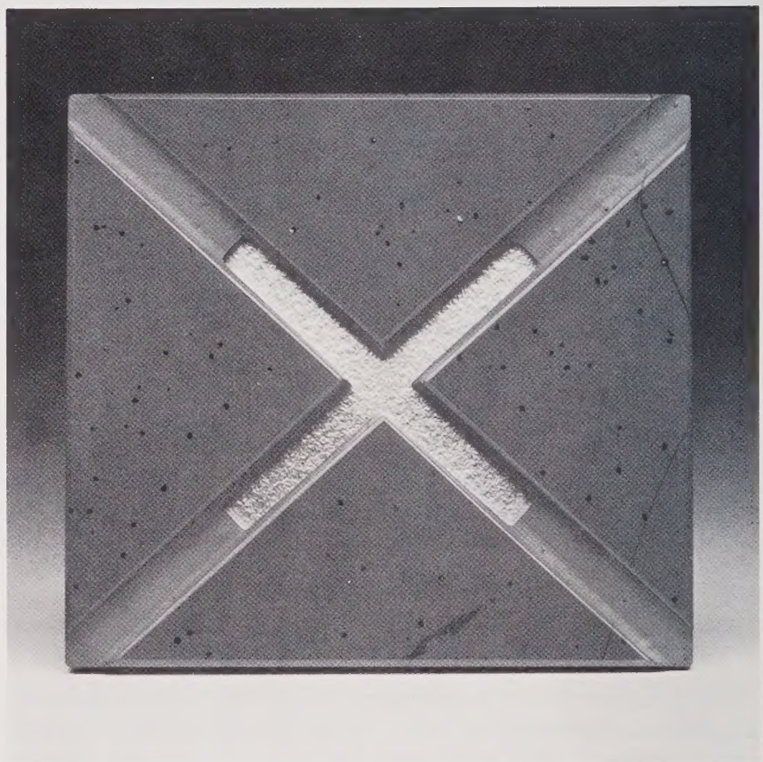
Seemingly influenced by the primitive art of aboriginal or African tribes, the work of Font resembles idols or statuettes. Two pieces in particular, *Home* (Man) and *Done* (Woman) use bold shapes, unlike the constructed approach of multiple elements inherent to much other work in this exhibition. There is an unrefined spontaneity in her sentiment, yet, coupled with impeccable technique, her work has a powerful simplicity.

The assembled brooches of Breis have influences from both constructivism and oriental art. Using solid forms and fine lines interwoven with clear and opaque shapes, her work is a balance of fragility and boldness. She invites wearer partcipation through changing the form and the manner in which the piece is worn.

Luc Pilon is a Montreal jeweler, who studied at The Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Halifax.



Pattern Series Brooch, black onyx, c. 2 x 2", 1990
Photo: James Beards



Erosion Series Brooch, red jasper, 18k gold, c. 2 x 2", 1990
Photo: James Beards

Donald Friedlich

Garth Clark Gallery, New York
April 10 – May 5, 1990

by Nancy Boxenbaum

In Donald Friedlich's exhibition, visual simplicity and elegance belie an undercurrent of intellectual complexity. The works are divided into two series, *Pattern* and *Erosion*, and, with the exception of two bracelets, are all brooches. Created from stone or glass, each piece exemplifies Friedlich's sensitive appreciation for and deft manipulation of material. Several brooches (most are 1½ to 2" square) contradict their natural properties by appearing to be synthetic: the glass brooches look like lucite; the onyx, rubber. This deception is underscored by the handheld weight of the brooches that actually appear light and delicate. The two agate bracelets do not partake of this strategy. They are large and forbidding, both visually and physically.

The surfaces are delicately carved with square grooves, linear ridges and cubes set in shallow relief against carved backgrounds. Though the edges are straight, carefully planned and formal, the surface undulates with an organic rhythm that counteracts the sense of rational design.

In this way, Friedlich establishes a dialogue within each series. The surfaces in the *Pattern* series, for instance, are neatly carved grids, with one displaced element set in relief. It is a play on the notion of patternmaking, especially the characteristic of regularity, since major emphasis is placed on either the wavy, organic shape of the surface or the displaced element that interrupts the pattern.

In the *Erosion* series, each piece has a focal element that is raised and highly polished. What has "eroded" from the background of the work has a matte finish, contributing to an implicit irony that is the theme of this series. The high-tech, post-industrial esthetic of highly polished areas evokes the intervention of the artist's hand and his control over his materials, yet his ultimate dominance is questioned by the organic shape of the surface and the allusion to nature, over which humans have no control.

Each piece is self-contained, physically proportioned to scale. However, because the surface pattern extends to the edges of each brooch, it might be perceived as a fragment of a larger, infinitely repeating pattern. One rectangular brooch of red jasper has horizontal bands of gold inserted into carved grooves, evoking a "ladder" scheme, while others with grid patterns look like details from an aerial view of a cityscape.

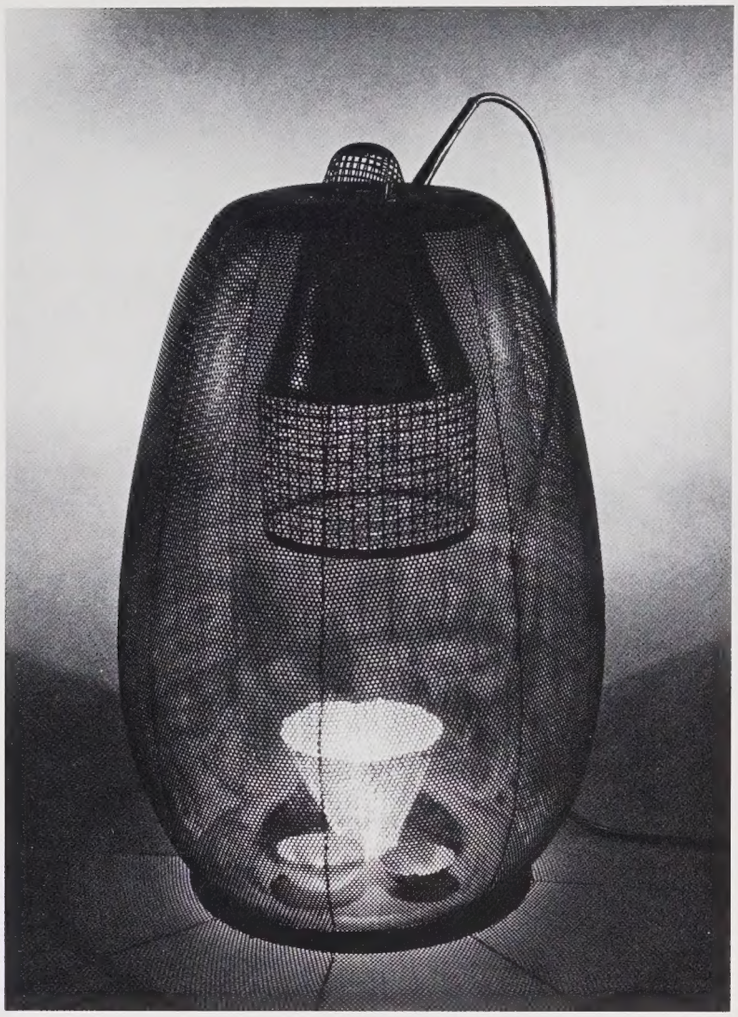
Nancy Boxenbaum is the editorial assistant at the College Art Association, New York.

Justify, steel, 20 x 18 x 11", 1990

Rodney McCormick
Lamps, Sculpture, Lighted Sculpture

Owen Patrick Gallery, Philadelphia, PA
June, 1990

by Michael Dunas



Dusky, steel, aluminum, brass, quartz halogen lamp, 28 x 17", 1989

In what can be considered a debut exhibition, Rod McCormick has jettisoned his previous connection with limited-production jewelry for a startling range of engineered sculptures of welded steel rod and perforated sheet metal. Following the example of his fellow metalsmiths who made the 1986 "Form Beyond Function" exhibition a salvo for change, McCormick here further testifies to a gratifying expansion of "metalsmith" sculpture from a principled base of jewelry and holloware esthetics. His strategies with volume, compositional logic and precise construction enhance the veiled wit of his adventurous forms.

Three floor pieces, torcheres, which adhere to the strict notion of lamps as light-transmitting fixtures, are slyly irreverent to the customary pose of upright beacons, passive onlookers in a room's interior decor. The paper-covered shades of two lamps in particular project a delicate, ethereal light in the familiar Japanese lantern idiom. The fixture, on the other hand, is a composite of McCormick's recurring motifs, the industrial shapes of ducts, funnels, chimneys, elbow joints, grating and sheathing that is the vocabulary of the sheetmetal worker. Taking its cue from the masklike expression of the lantern, the staunch plumbing assumes the posture of a naive tinman, radiating gleefully, armatures akimbo, lamp head straining with interest to engage the conversational space of the room.

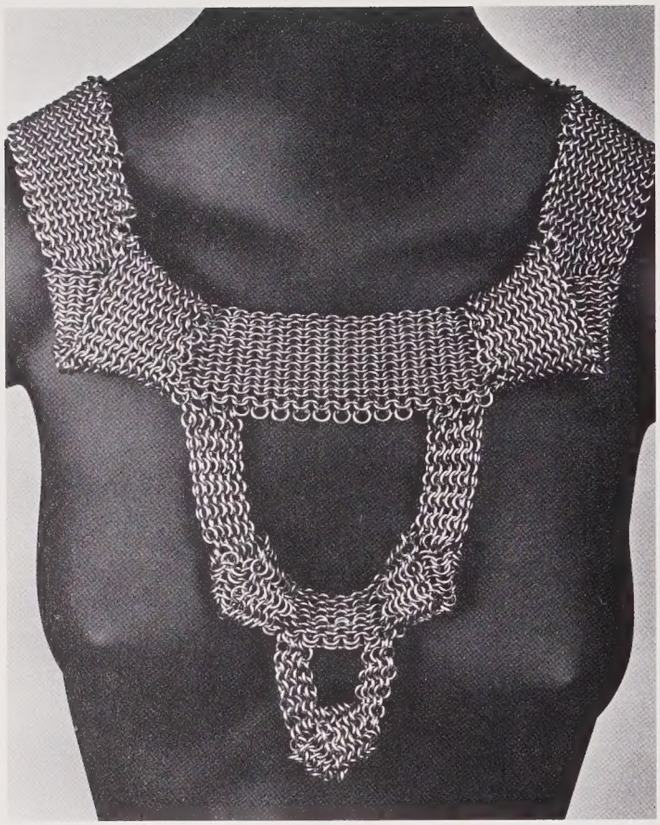
The metal surface of most of the work in the show is treated with acid, producing at times a blackened and at times a rustlike patina. The slapdash application appears as a mottled glaze rather than the result of age and weathering. It is a telltale sign of McCormick's ironic attachment to prosaic metal, appreciative of the abstract qualities of color, form and texture without romanticizing them. He finds fantasy in the realistic applications of metal without delusion of recondite preciousness.

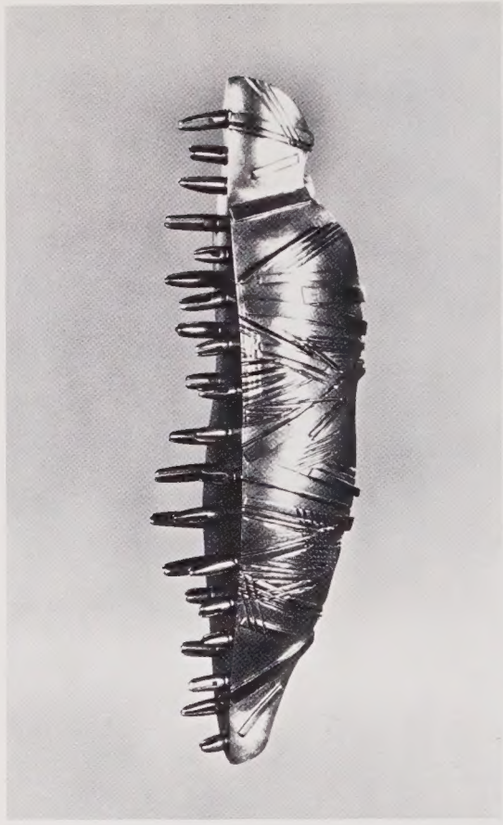
In contrast, the tabletop sculptures and their related wall reliefs are one step removed from his lamps and illuminated tableaux, transitional pieces that mark the shift from jewelry. In scale, they describe a torso with the implication of theatrical adornment, and as such they isolate more clearly McCormick's evolution from the semantics of constructivist jewelry: the abstraction of geometric motifs, the emphasis of volume over mass, the caged anthropomorphism, the delicate welding, the transparency of structure and, above all, a rationality of design that is physically alien yet cerebrally enticing.

As a result, they lay a foundation for appreciating the radical achievement of the two illuminated tableaux. Bird-cage in size, they are enclosed steel-mesh containers with a suspended quartz halogen lamp that casts a glow on an assembly of austere perforated vessels at the base of the cage. The primary subject of the composition is light, contained within the piece rather than transmitted out into the room, closely resembling the inner luminosity of a thick glass form. Tension is created in our feeling that more exists than we actually know, that there is more light than matter, that material forms result less from the reality of fabrication than the illusion of light's refraction. The effect is surreal, with the holloware a mirage, dematerializing into what McCormick calls ghost forms of itself.

The purity of the abstraction derives from his evocation of material anonymity and structural logic, concepts germane to minimalist ornament as well as independent sculpture. The vessels are reductive and nondescript. The cages look like conical lampshades stretched and pulled down to the base. Even the fixture that holds the lamp reflects the overall design of a simplified rotational geometry. Efficient, ordered, calculated, they nonetheless uphold McCormick's trenchant wit directed towards metal's debased industrial past.

Michael Dunas writes on art, craft and design and teaches a craft history course at University of the Arts and Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia.





New Ohio Jewelry

Massillon Museum, Massillon, OH
January 28 – March 4, 1990

by Matthew Hollern

Left
Ilana Painter, *Nexus*, brass, steel, 12 x 12", 1987
Photo: Tom Whittington
Above
Robin Kraft, *Brooch*, sterling silver, copper
6 x 2 x 1", 1989

The importance of the show was perhaps not the "new-ness" nor the "Ohio-ness" of the work, but rather its ability to reach a lay audience. Costume, fashion and fine jewelry were defined in curator Bruce Metcalf's statements, drawing on the broad scope of studio jewelry. Under this umbrella, then, the plastics, found objects, small sculpture, chain mail and architectonic forms in the show could be understood as compatible "vehicles for self-expression and the exploration of ideas." The purpose of the show was simple: to exhibit the diverse, innovative works presently being done in Ohio, to pave the way for greater public interest and understanding of jewelry.

Work by Robin Kraft made thoughtful use of enamels, electroforms and mixed media. Her series of 10 brooches explored wood, paint, nails, thread and gold leaf, through ghostlike, figurative images. Her work varies from emphasis on form and volume with subtle enamel coloration, to flat and highly graphic pieces. The work came across as formal rather than conceptual or thematic.

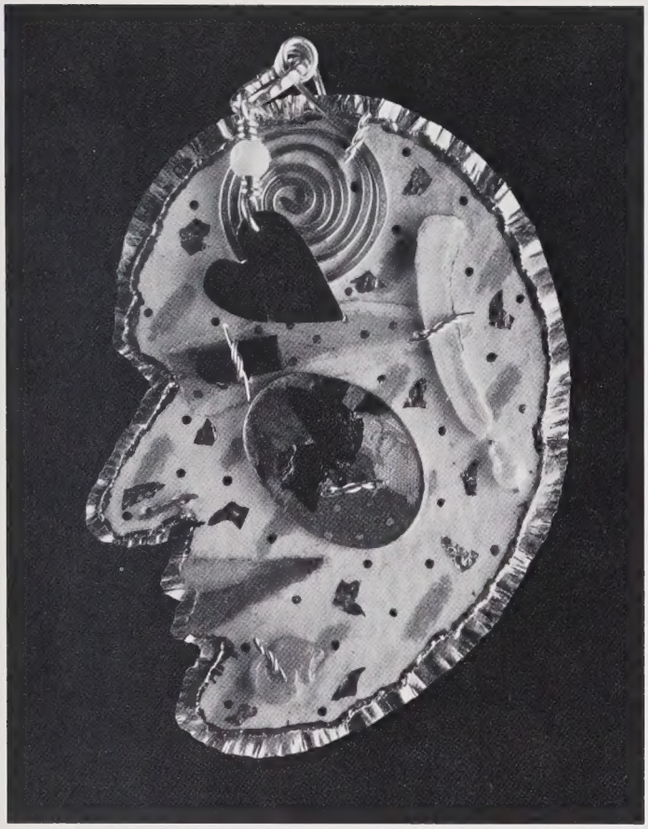
Jewelry by Kathy Buszkiewicz had a simple Eastern quality that emphasizes smooth, pure forms with minimal surface embellishments and pattern. She describes her work as "wearable sculpture," addressing the body as a "mobile environment." Yet, concern for wearability was evident. Su*rreptitious Snare* effectively created tension between beauty and danger, like that of a Venus-Fly-Trap. A web of tiny interlaced fingers bridge the mouth of the brooch. The unified surface of fine silver, lightly cross-hatched with file, cuts has a plant-like quality that sharply contrasts with the toothy orifice.

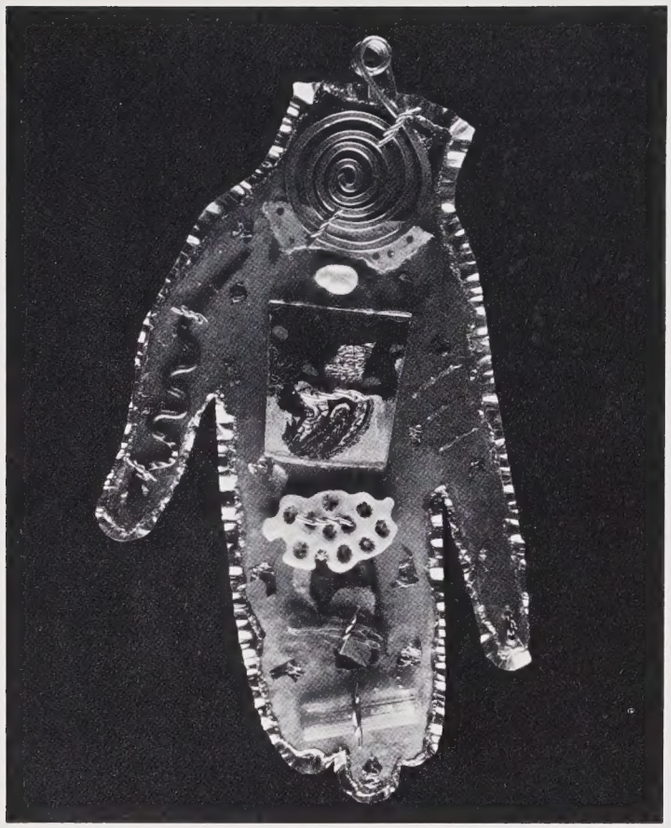
Ilana Painter, a graduate student at Kent State University, exhibited a series of jewelry in chain-mail. Her work went beyond the basic labor of making mail to create innovative forms of drapery. She exploited the fabriclike qualities of the material in rolled and folded neckpieces. She further departed from traditional mail in her use of patinas, bone and rubber O-rings. Though seen as adornment, the drapery maintained the essence of mail, conveying a protective armorlike quality. The work succeeded in balancing the use of a familiar reference with new colors, forms and contexts.

Work by Kira Louscher included a very large, burdensome neckpiece. It is perhaps, the work furthest from the mainstream, maintaining its jewelry reference through the use of "current design trends." The neckpiece or sash is a personal composition, familiar yet fresh. She combines gilded wood forms, raw wire cages holding objects and small, shallow pierced vessels patinated green. Her discussion of physical metaphors for love and hate, male and female, is evident in her larger works. The raw quality of her work is effective but for the mechanisms where the question of function and wearability arises.

Jewelry by Cindy Cetlin, Susan Ewing, Anna Nuzzo, Jonathan Quick and Roberta Williamson was also included in this exhibition.

Matthew Hollern teaches metalsmithing at the Cleveland Institute of Art.





Ken Bova

Artifacts Gallery, Bozeman, MT
April 20 – May 16, 1990

by Harvey Hamburgh

Left
No Stranger, sterling, 23k gold, fine silver, bone, tourmaline, coral, butterfly wing, paper, paint, 3⅝ x 2½ x ¼", 1990. Photo: Jayme Schlepp
Above
The Green Piece, sterling silver, 23k gold, coral, pearl, bone, tourmaline, butterfly wing, paper, apint, 4½ x 2¼ x ¼", 1990. Photo: Jayme Schlepp

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They could be eloquent totems of mysterious cults: the Clan of the Bluebird, the Clan of the Hand, of the Dream Man, of the Brook Trout. We can imagine these clans as constituting a diminutive tribe, with a sympathy for the smallest things, delighting in the discovery of minute, colorful bits of a potent world, and taking pleasure in decorating themselves with these treasures that others would disdain, or never see. The wearers of these ornaments possess a low order of technology, but a compensatory sophistication of stylistic invention and responsiveness to the magic of the visual. Their spiritual life seems to be focused upon the celebration of rich detail; yet these clans fade into fantasy with the discovery that the evocative totems are products of the artistry of Ken Bova, a metalsmith living and working in Bozeman, Montana.

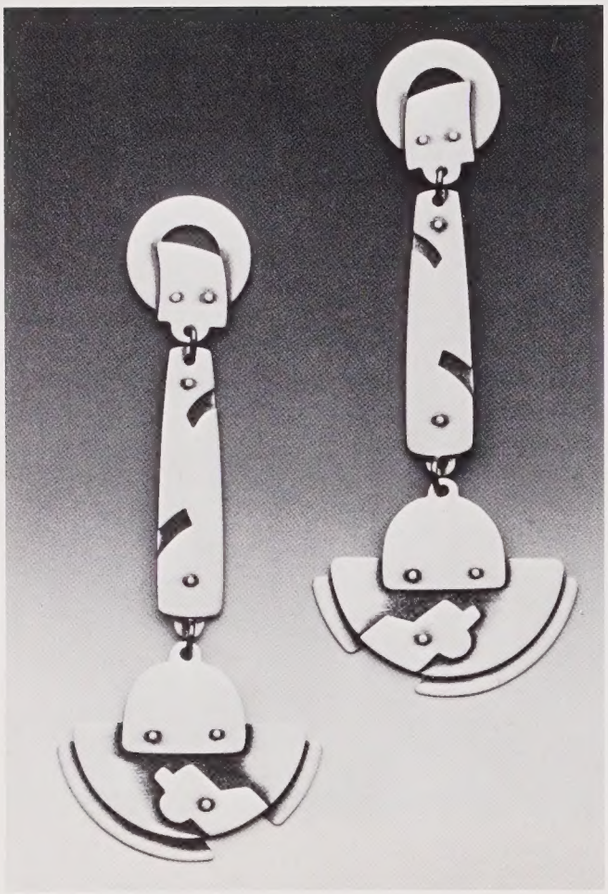
Bova has, for some time, explored a jewelry of abstract shapes cut from sterling silver, surfaced with rag paper, paint and varnish, with found objects and precious stones tied to the flat fields of color. The new work continues in this mode, configured in familiar silhouettes. The fabrication is simple and direct, and, in its avoidance of forging or casting techniques, free of any suggestion of industrial production. These pins, more graphic than sculptural, are thin and delicate, and though substantial for utility, they demand a care of handling appropriate for the precious and ephemeral. Commonly valued stones and metals are employed in conjunction with unexpectedly prized materials, such as a cross-section of bone, a metal button, a flash of wrapping paper, a rupee note from Nepal, a tiny, sinuous twig, a piece of pencil, a fragment of a house key, the wing of a butterfly. These objects surprise us in their beauty and draw us into a curiously integrated world. Though each element remains discrete, they interact upon a vibrant, variegated plane, mutually reinforcing their preciousness.

Bova's unique sensibility is shaped by several distinct experiences. The prominent usage of silver wires and varnished papers in his constructions stems from his childhood play amid the ribbons and jars of sparkling glitters in the back of his parents' flower shop in Texas, while his particular vision of ornament, as a surface to be aroused by color, shows signs of his early training as a painter. The surfaces are emphatically patterned, whether with brushstrokes or flecks of goldleaf, providing a light accompaniment to the rhythmic placement of the tied corals, crystals and bones. Bova's love of pattern derives from another passion, Montana fly fishing, and a consequent close-up study of the surfaces of trout: the tactility, sheen and variation of the scales, as well as the patterns that could be extrapolated from tropical fish.

Bova's cold-connection technique also relates to the skills and satisfactions of the fly-tying process. The silver pin-stems of his pieces culminate in spinning spirals that ignite the dynamic relationships across the face of the pin. The spiral stem of *No Stranger* with its benign, Buddha-like profile acts as a symbol of the psyche, as if it were a Jungian diagram of this charismatic character's consciousness. The spiral in *Green Piece* might suggest the eddies of a whirlpool, as the applications of pearl and coral, the serpentine of gold, the foamlike dashes of paint and the brilliant colors of sand, sky and sea all create the ambience of a palm-size tropical paradise.

The image of the hand, traced from the artist's own, and appearing often in Bova's oeuvre, can also symbolize the power of the artist to synthesize and shape reality, and to beckon us into an intimate, luminous realm that reveals the special, modest beauty of small wonders.

Harvey Hamburgh teaches at the School of Art, Montana State University.



Contemporary Jewelry

The Baker Gallery, Kansas City, KS
September 15 – October 15, 1989

by Ann E. Erbacher

Left
Bill Ruth and Susan Mahlstedt, *Earrings*, sterling silver, brass rivets, 1989
Photo: George Post
Above
Debbi Sprinkle, *Cuff Earrings, Doorway Bolo*, sterling silver, copper, 1989

The Baker Gallery hosted an exhibition of nine Kansas City-based metalsmiths, most of whom trained at The University of Kansas in Lawrence. The work of husband and wife team Bill Ruth and Susan Mahlstedt revealed a strong sense of whimsy. Their pins, earrings and one necklace employed a variety of motifs, from architectural elements to arrows, cars, cows, fish, keyholes, ladders and palm trees. The pieces are constructed primarily of satin-finished sterling silver and acrylic, with some airbrushed enamel paint, 14k gold, onyx and lapis. Riveting and piercing are two construction techniques frequently used. Elements hang freely from the main body of the pieces, adding a sense of movement when worn.

Jewelry by Robyn Nichols is wearable sculpture strongly influenced by nature forms. Highly polished sterling, chased and repousséd, is used with coral and pearls. The titles, *Berries, Chinese Lantern, Eucalyptus* and *Kelp*, signal their design sources.

Debbi Sprinkle's jewelry relies on abstract forms, creating tension through the use of various shapes, colors and textures. Sterling, copper and brass are used, sometimes with agate, in earrings, pins and bolo ties. Earcuffs are Sprinkle's trademark item. The *Doorway Bolo* combines copper and sterling in a simple yet effective design reminiscent of Santa Fe architecture.

The triangular forms of Keith Harryman's pieces are reminiscent of sails and windsurfing. Sterling, white gold, lapis, onyx and opals are used in the earrings, pins and one bracelet which combines highly polished and textured surfaces accented with stones.

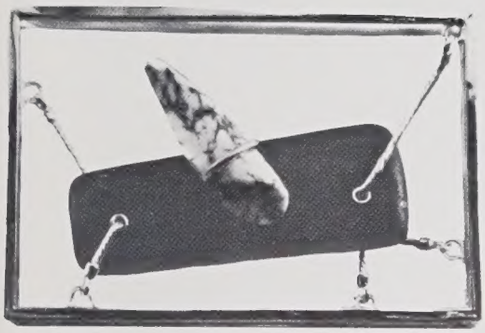
Philip Voetsch uses mostly 14k gold and vermeil in his limited production, fashion jewelry. The forms are primarily domed circles and teardrop shapes with pierced "windows" to allow the highly polished surfaces of the backings to contrast against the satin finished top pieces. A triangular pin with three spherical elements was among the more interesting of his pieces.

Karin Jordan's jewelry employs sterling, nickel, mokume, freshwater pearls, ebony and ivory in combinations of geometric and organic elements. She ascribes her influences to Art Deco, Japanese, and Southwestern design, although the Japanese influence is most apparent.

Genevieve Flynn's rings, earrings, pins and bracelets employ mostly sterling, with some use of ebony and aluminum. Piercing is used to add interest to the shapes. A circular sterling element is contrasted with a magenta aluminum, triangular piece in one pair of earrings.

Michael Wyckoff uses primarily gold and faceted precious and semi-precious stones in his rings, earrings, pins and one necklace, although ebony and pearls are also employed. His work had the most commercial appearance of that exhibited.

Ann E. Erbacher is the Registrar at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO.



Pin, 750 gold, soapstone, lapis lazuli, 1986

Rings, silver, 750 gold, slate, lapis lazuli, 1986 – 87

Harold O'Connor
The Intuitive Spirit

Hughes Fine Arts Center Gallery
University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND
February 5 – 23, 1990

by Nancy Soonpaa

Harold O'Connor's use of spare, clean lines and sharply delineated shapes evokes images of New Mexico, where he works. The sandlike roughness of his textured surface is set off by the sharp glint of a burnished shine. The shapes – unpolished pebbles and randomly stacked tubes – bring to mind a mysterious pile of tumbled rock, or perhaps the rough truth of a sunbleached stack of bones. His work is also drawn from experiences with nearby Colorado's mining industry. In a nod to technology, O'Connor uses eyelets and twisted wire to give an ordered, structural quality to the compositions, lending a sense of tension/compression to his subtle reflections on life and nature.

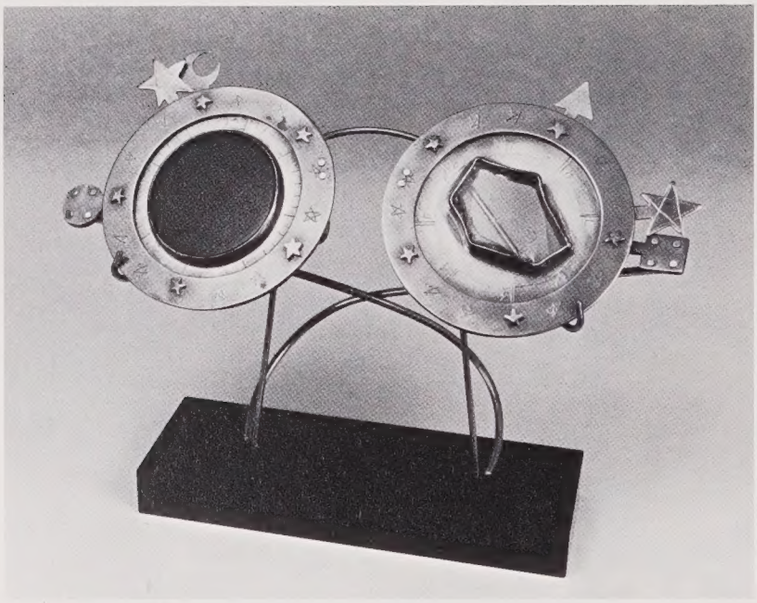
One group of O'Connor's pins employs lengths of rough, usually silver, tubing arranged in a pick-up-stick style, although in one case they form a tightly constructed, boxlid configuration. Eyelets bearing lengths of twisted wire run from tube to opposing tube, capturing in their relentless midst a slender cylinder of gray-veined soapstone, or a crystalline length of bluish-green tourmaline girded by fine gold. Several of these pins are favored by a covering of metal, hammered, textured and shaped to drape as gracefully as fine silk. To set off the drapery's flow, O'Connor adds a common pebble, worn to a naturalistic taupe by the passage of time and grooved to receive its restraining wires of shiny gold.

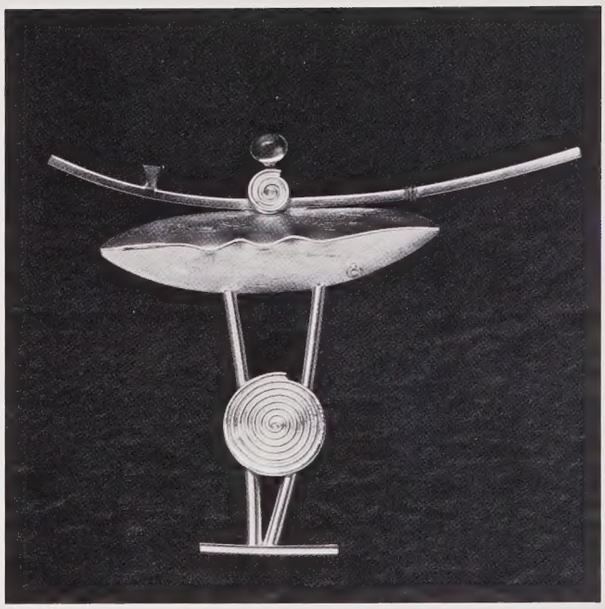
Each of four wall plaques (*Parting Stream, Island in the Sea, Fields Within, and Pathway to Sargus*) contains a tiny pictorial collage of 18k gold, silver and copper, displayed in a wood frame. Within, an inverted stack of raised suede mats, in a tonal progression of desert beiges, leads the eye to the art work itself. All four of the framed statements begin with a square border of flat wire set on edge, layered on top of and beside irregular, textured slips of other metals. In one piece, the square has been broken, the upper right quadrant floating lazily away from the lower half to evoke a *Parting Stream.* In another way, the inner square is firmly centered on a larger flat square, as if to contrive the *Fields Within.*

Nature is a major theme in O'Connor's art. One ring beautifully combines the natural element with the man-crafted, to form a harmonious yet dichotomous whole. The ring begins with a chunk of silver, irregular as the day it was plucked from the earth. A tapering shank of 18k gold attaches at one side of the back and, swelling, approaches the other, where it penetrates to the front of the ring through a propitiously placed opening in the silver. The end of the shank, smothered in shiny, regular, fine-gold granulation, stands in mute contrast to the bumpy silver beneath.

There are occasional flaws in O'Connor's work, in both esthetics and craftsmanship. A rough cigar shape, appearing in both pins and necklace, jars an appreciative reverie. Whether this shape sports a bear claw (the necklace) or is set off with a stone (the pins), it bears an unpleasant and uncanny resemblance to an alien invader, sufficiently spoiling the mood. The tension/compression pieces are also marred, at times, by the obvious presence of glue peeping beneath the captured stone; this concession to security betrays the artist's intention, as does the disconcerting aspect of some wires, which appear to have relaxed enough that the captured stone could escape, if it had a mind to.

Nancy Soonpaa is an attorney, lecturer in English, and a student of metalsmithing at the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks.





SNAG '90
The Society of North American Goldsmiths Conference

San Francisco, CA
March 14 – 17, 1990

by Betsy Douglas

Bridges bring people together. "Bridges," the theme of this conference, brought 500 enthusiastic metalsmiths to the Cathedral Hill Hotel in San Francisco. Local members organized an exciting four days of interaction, starting with the opening reception at the Japanese Pavilion that featured the traditional pin swap. Fabricated pins, cast pins, stamped pins, folded-paper pins, rubber pins, plastic pins, painted stick pins, rhinestone dogbone pins, bullet pins, spiculum pins, enameled pins and "Bridge Mix" pins were bartered between old and new friends. Contingents from as far away as Great Britain and Australia joined the action.

The business of the conference began with SNAG president Douglas Steakley's welcome address. Featured speaker Dr. Albert Alligator, the alter ego of puppeteer Willy Claflin, spoofed metalsmiths' foibles with perspicacity and a "transcendent dualistic consciousness." After things were put in the proper perspective, the business meeting commenced over production matters of *Metalsmith* magazine and the *Newsletter*; future conferences and exhibitions; SNAG workshop programs; membership services; introduction of candidates for president and the SNAG board and the presentation of the annual budget.

Conference coordinator Marc Paisin and members of his committee distributed prizes from random drawings to lucky registrants. Kenneth Trapp of the Oakland Museum followed with his experiences in collecting metalwork for the museum.

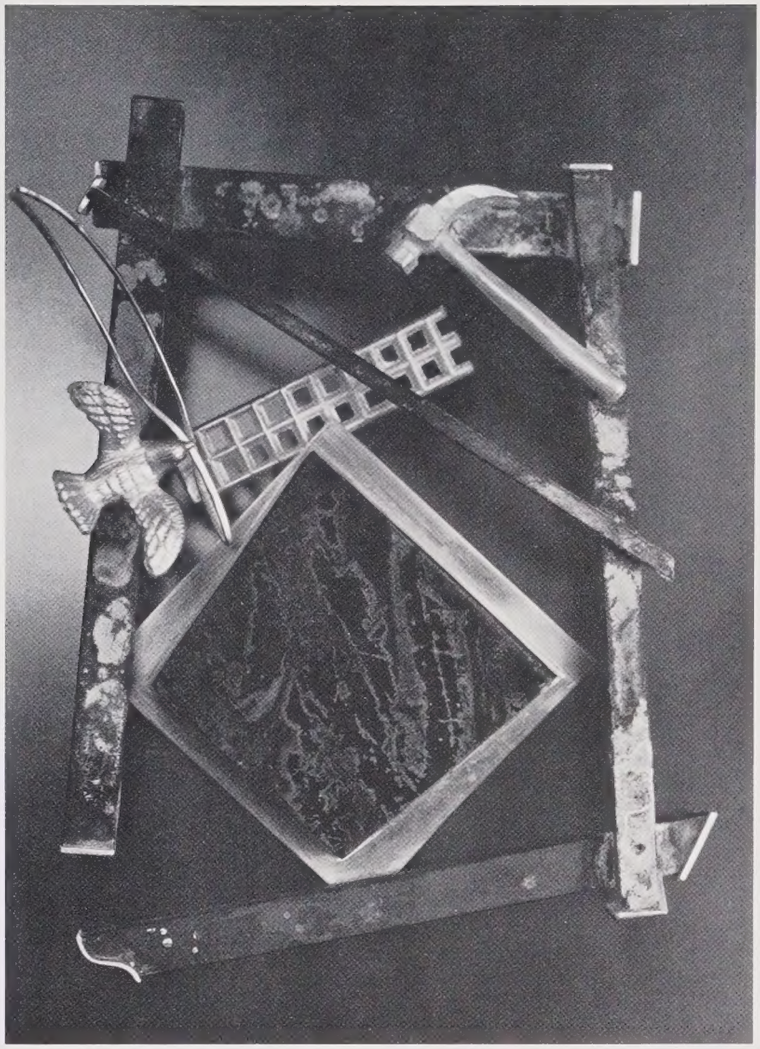
After lunch, participants were treated to "Bridges to Down Under: Contemporary Australian Jewelry & Metalwork," an informative overview of current Australian metalwork presented by Jeannie Keefer Bell. Inspired by last year's SNAG Conference presentation of young American metalsmiths and their work, Susan Fortune and Helen Craven introduced 22 "Emerging Artists of Great Britain." Both slide lectures demonstrated that innovative metalsmithing traditions are alive and well in their respective countries.

Thursday evening, SNAG bought out the house of the long-running "Beach Blanket Babylon," a theatrical review of outrageous hats and costumes, songs, dances and puns by talented performers. Enthusiastic conferees dressed up in crazy costumes and hats. The evening was a huge success.

Friday morning, two Cranbrook students, Frances Killam and JoEllen Stevens presented their research on pioneering women metalsmiths from the Midwest in a lecture entitled: "Wynn, Copeland and Bowles: Models in Studio Practice." Copper and mica lamps, and other objects created in the San Francisco studio of Dirk Van Erp, around the turn of the century, were described by Dorothy Lamoureux, who guest-curated an exhibition of Van Erp's work at the San Francisco Craft and Folk Art Museum in 1989.

Friday afternoon – pick one from simultaneous presentations: "Fold Forming Update" (Charles Lewton-Brain); "How to make an Instructional Video" (Meg Corwin); "Antique Line Engraving Machines" (Peter Rowe); "California Alternatives: Nontraditional Metals Education" (Marcia Lewis); and "Piercing: Ornamentation as Radical Statement" (Keith Lewis and Jim Ward). Tough choice! The "Piercing" presentation dealt with little-known exotic body ornamentation. Lewis and Ward treated their material in a straightforward and honest manner.

During the day, the Vendors' Display Room was open, allowing conferees to explore an array of tools, to see demonstrations of new equipment, to shop for stones, books and to bid on the donated works for the SNAG Silent Auction. In the late afternoon, vendors graciously hosted a reception and the lucky auction bidders claimed their treasures. The Silent Auction raised more than $6000 for upgrading and updating the Audio/Visual Library.



Left to right

Judith Hoffman, *Spectacles for Seeing Stars*, silver, brass, plexiglass, found glass, fabricated, 2¾ x 6¼ x 5", 1988
Received Rio Grande, Albuquerque Merchandise Award

Irene Mori, *Pulse*, sterling silver, 22k gold, moonstone, 3 x 2½ x ¼"

Jirobe Takagi, *Kettle for Japanese Tea Ceremony*, cast iron

Dawn Nakanishi, *Building the Nest*, brass, sterling silver, sugelite, 4½ x 4", 1989

Friday evening was the scene of gallery openings: "California Metal Forms '90" at the California Crafts Museum at Ghirardelli Square; "Metal Sculpture and Function" at the Virginia Brier Gallery; and antique metalwork at Argentum. It was difficult to see all the work with 500 people trooping through galleries not designed for this kind of traffic. Return visits were a good idea. The conference gave us a chance to explore this exciting city and to enjoy some of its great restaurants and galleries.

A highly successful tool auction at the hotel capped the evening. Kris Williams, Peter Jagoda, Dave Pimentel, Dawn Nakanishi and other rousing auctioneers encouraged the crowd to part with their money for marvelous equipment and tools. Betty Helen Longhi donated, then bought back, the infamous sinusoidal-handled hammer again! The vendors were particularly generous in their donations and approximately $3000 was raised for the future membership directory and additional membership services.

We missed Alma Eikerman, scheduled to speak about her work on Saturday morning; she was unfortunately unable to attend. Marc Paisin shared his humorous and informative approach to law for metalsmiths, discussing copyright, contracts, studio liability, commissions and commission cancellations. Harlan Butt and Larry Sokyo Tiscornia illustrated in slides the ritualistic art objects of the Japanese tea ceremony.

Presentations Saturday afternoon included tips on "Updating Your Slide Collection" by Kris Williams, a second opportunity to hear the "Piercing" lecture and a comprehensive talk by Jo Hanson on artists' rights, business records and taxation. Hanson is the author of a much-needed book called *Artists' Taxes, The Hands-On Guide.*

The entire membership felt the loss of our treasurer, Richard Austin, who was stricken and died during the conference. It marked a great personal loss for all of us. His contributions to the organization were invaluable, and he is greatly missed as a friend.

The Second Plenary Session saw the introduction of new officers. Peter Jagoda is SNAG's president-elect and new board members are Billie Jean Theide and Patty Daunis-Dunning. New business included a proposal by Arline Fisch for SNAG's participation in the "Year of American Crafts" scheduled for 1993. Fisch will act as SNAG's liaison.

Grand Finale – SNAG's Saturday evening's festivities at San Francisco's Exploratorium featured a delicious buffet, dancing and participation in scientific exhibits: creating huge iridescent bubbles, catching your shadow on a wall and transmitting your voice with parabolic reflectors. Ira Sherman offered two showings of his tongue-in-cheek performance of "Panaceas to Persistent Problems – Sculptural Devices." Sherman and his assistants demonstrated bizarre, mechanical, metal contraptions on good-natured volunteers from the audience. One of these complex wearable sculptures appeared to be a pneumatic chastity belt. Sherman's devices were intricate, masterfully crafted, surprisingly strong and full of humor, providing another healthy chance for metalsmiths to laugh at themselves.

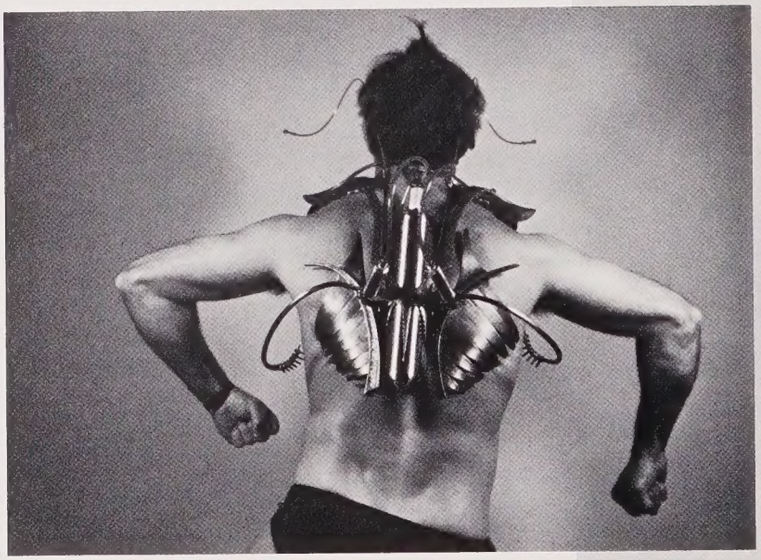
Pre-conference and post-conference workshops, open houses and exhibitions in the San Francisco area rounded out the rich experience. Kudos to the planners of SNAG '90! The hospitality, diverse programs and entertainment were great and not to have been missed! But, if you did, go to Atlanta. Pre-register for "Metalmorphosis" — March 20 – 24, 1991. I'll see you there!

Betsy Douglas is a metalsmith living in Paradise Valley, AZ.

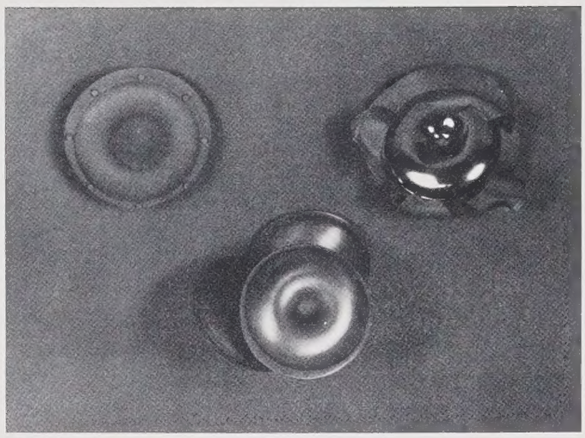
To order a copy of Jo Hanson's *Artists' Taxes, The Hands-on Guide*, write: Vortex Press SF, 1800 Market Street, San Francisco, CA 94102. The book is $13.50, including postage; CA residents add $.80 sales tax.

Ira Sherman
Explosion Injection Forming Harness
steel, stainless steel, brass,
aluminum, plastic and gunpowder
72 x 18 x 12"

This piece is designed as a freestanding kinetic sculpture, as well as a body sculpture with a specific mechanical function that interacts on and with the human body. The forming harness uses an explosive charge to form metal into jewelry (see opposite page): a piece of sculpture/jewelry that actually creates another piece of jewelry/sculpture. All Sherman's work manipulates mechanical components into esthetic forms. The mechanics become the esthetic. No attempt is made to box in or cover up any mechanical component. The pieces often define societal absurdities.



Letters



Ira Sherman, *Injection Forms*
experimental, silver, brass, copper

Dear Editor:

In communist countries when a social or political uprising threatens a government, the first people to be put in prisons are the artists. Artists in all media are put in prison because they represent the human need for freedom to create and express their definition of themselves and of the society in which they live. Art must explore all parts of our society. Art will always redefine our values and moralities and this is one reason why art offends the supporters of the Helms amendment (see *Editorial*, Summer 90). If we believe in this coutry that there is only one correct morality, we will be no better than a totalitarian country that is afraid of and locks up their artists. The supporters of the Helms amendment do not understand that free-thinking creative artists are a treasure to our country, worthy of support from our government. The National Endowment for the Arts represents the commitment to freedom of expression of which Americans should be proud. I urge all Americans to secure their political and artistic freedoms by writing their legislators to vote for full NEA funding *without restrictions.*

Ira Sherman
Denver, CO

Dear Editor:

I want to say, "Hooray!" that Garth Clark singled out the work of Kiff Slemmons as having touched the (perhaps) hearts of reluctant art professionals (see *The Closing of Doors: An Interview with Garth Clark*, Summer 90). Kiff's art is from *her* pure heart and moves me enormously – not only for its technical excellence, emotional content and visual beauty – but, most of all, for the nameless quality of all great art.

Thanks, also, for dramatically beautiful photographs of the vessels of June Schwarcz. In 1982, William Harper showed slides of June's work and said, "These are the most wonderful enamel objects on the face of the earth. She fully understands her materials and uses them in new ways with no precedents."

Perhaps the accompanying text by Vanessa Lynn tells us more about the author's love of artspeak metaphor than about June's work. Expressions such as "formal dichotomies" and "semantic twists" convey little. June's vessels are the result of her excited, innocent and unfailingly excellent eye. Her love of textiles and her fascination with how clothing fits the body has been a big inspiration. Her constant search for new forms and colors transforms her life – and ours.

There are several technical inaccuracies in the text, i.e., it is "basse-taille," not "bas-taille," and I believe *Vessel #1036* is not plique-à-jour.

Laura K. Popenoe
Port Townsend, WA

Dear Editor:

I read with amazement and growing disbelief Donald Friedlich and Judith Mitchell's interview with Garth Clark. Here were the issues that plague us all, laid out with excruciating clarity, the answers just hanging out of reach, begging to be spoken. Why weren't they?

Why didn't someone just come out and say it: jewelry cannot be art? Jewelry, people, is a medium that communicates. It is not a blank canvas on which communication can be undertaken. Never mind the preciousness block, jewelry-as-art is radio-with-static. In this half of the 20th century, everybody wants to be an artist. This is only natural. Artists have been revered as "Culture Heros," to use an apt term I picked up somewhere, and who doesn't want to be a culture hero? I do! My problem began when my fragile ego demanded recognition, attention, strokes. Hey, all the artists I read about in books got theirs, why shouldn't I get mine? My stuff was every bit as arty as anything they had done! But the sad truth is that recognition for culture herodom is meted out by the culture and not the hero. It seemed to me that the most egregious self-promoters got the most recognition. In the crowd of heros, the dragons and the damsels were left to fend for themselves.

And so I took the challenge and became a happy jeweler. I find lots of room for expresssion in gems and gold. I am excited by the properties of the medium and find intense satisfaction in expressing the message of jewelry in a new way, free from the conflicting static of "art" considerations. Don't get me wrong – I am an artist. I didn't choose to be an artist, but I did choose to get out of the mob.

Why should the rules be different for metal-or-whatever-smiths? I know lots of painters – some I consider great painters – who labor in obscurity and look forward to dying in obscurity; they cannot do otherwise. They have confronted the realities of the art game directly, openly, honestly. We, on the other hand, get stuck in the cruel trap of self-estimation and blame: "If only jewelry were accepted as art, I'd surely be accepted as an artist! Oh, why, why, why, did cruel fate cast me in this role?" It weren't fate, brother. If there's one thing the art establishment has learned to do, it's recognize this sort of crap for what it is. We've taken the attention that comes from the fashion aspect of our work, we've taken the money that comes with the relative marketability of jewelry and now we want to lead the parade of culture heros, too? HA! Nothing doing, says the art establishment, and rightly so. You wanna be an artist? Take off the findings and compete in the art world. Then, let's see it come out from behind the oh-so-artificial protection of wearability and take the FULL brunt of competition, and *then* confront the agonizing personal reality of laboring in obscurity until whenever. The suggestion that museums should buy Bennetts instead of Van Goghs because they are cheaper is the suggestion of a merchant, not an artist.

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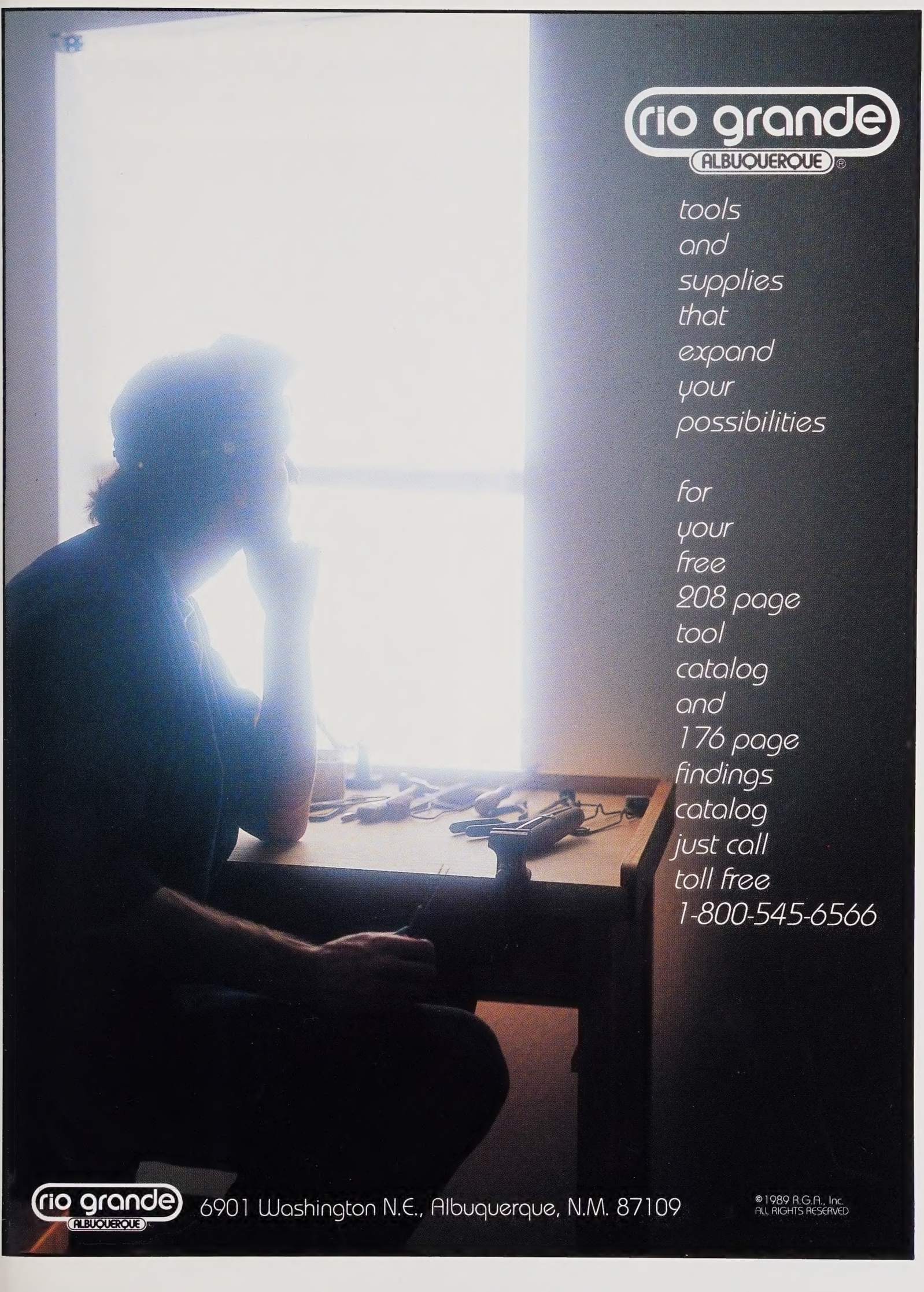
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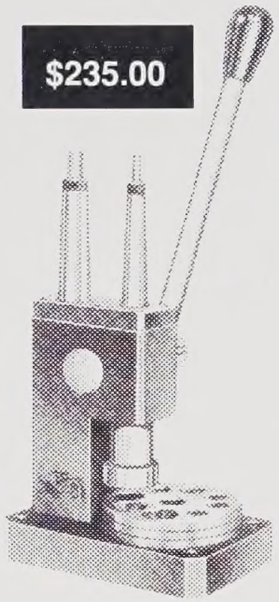

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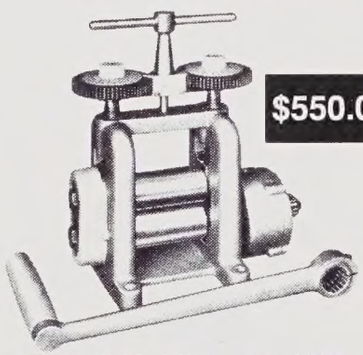

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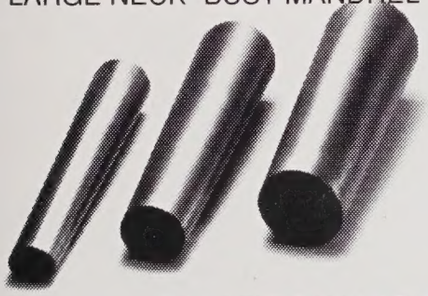

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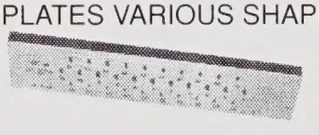

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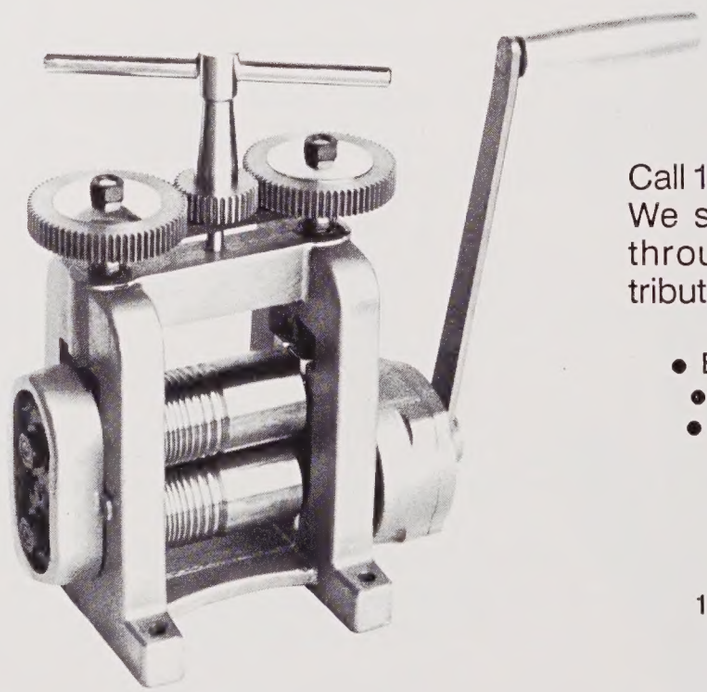

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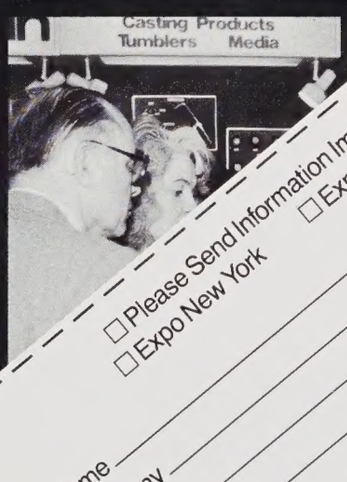

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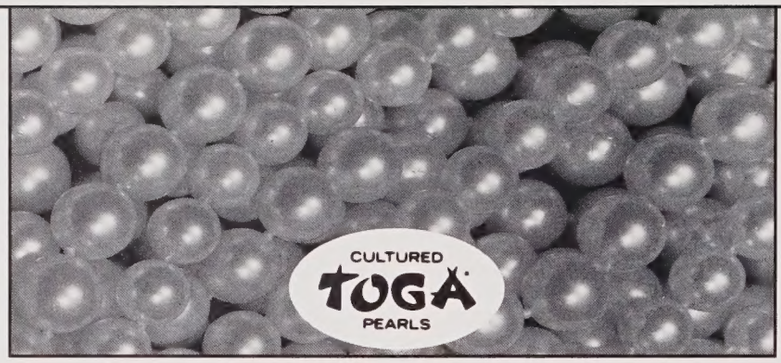

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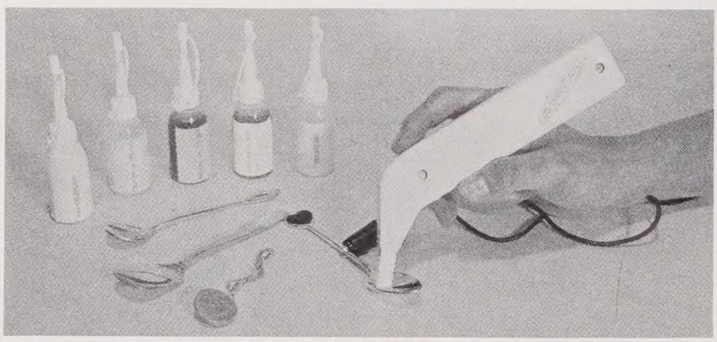

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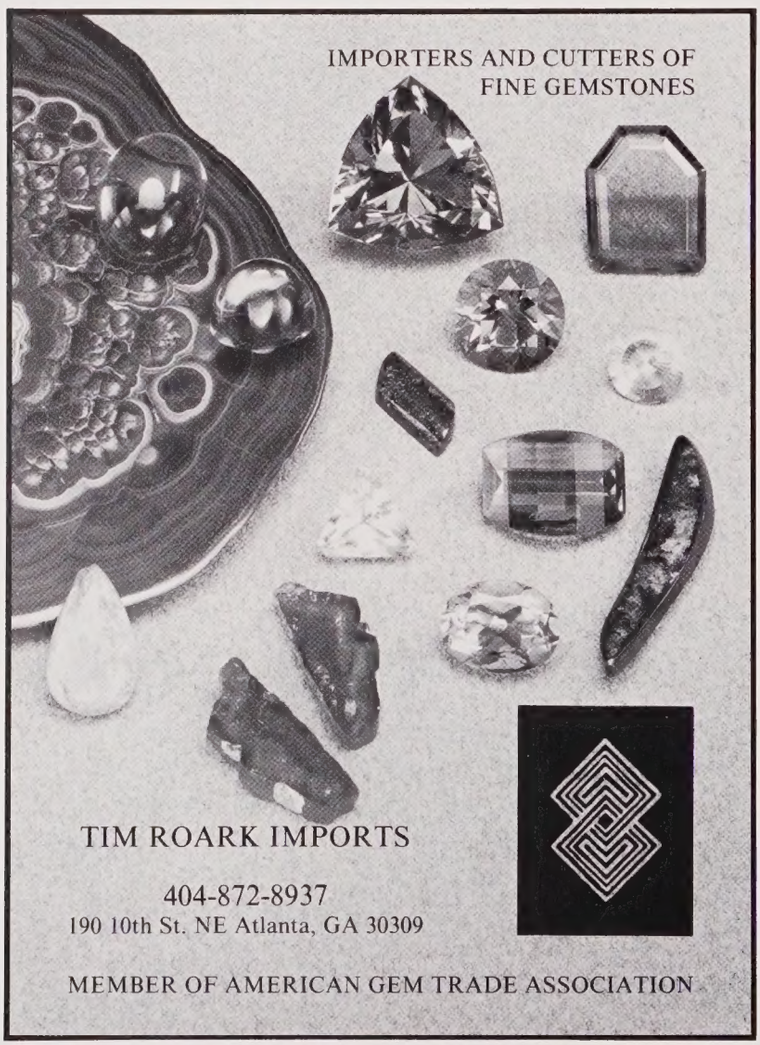

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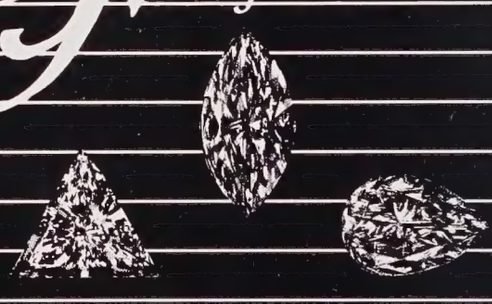

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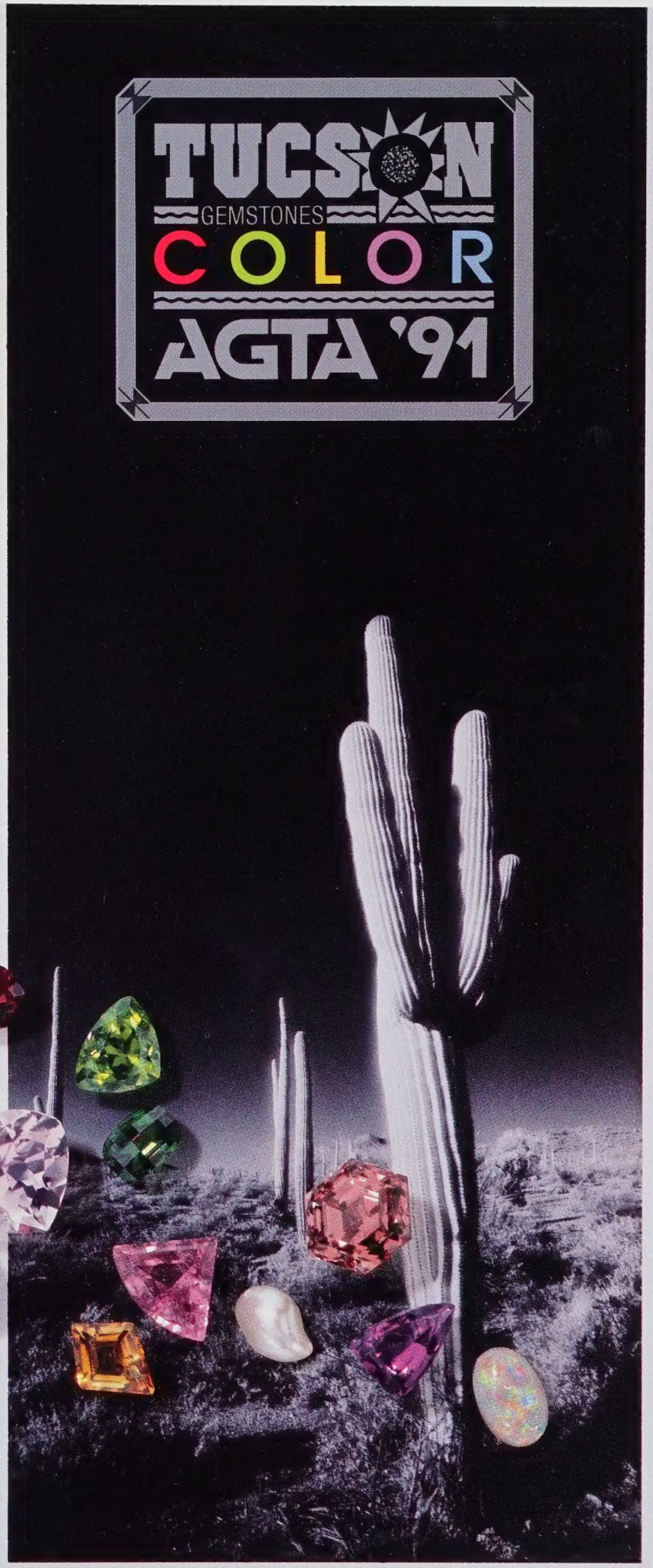

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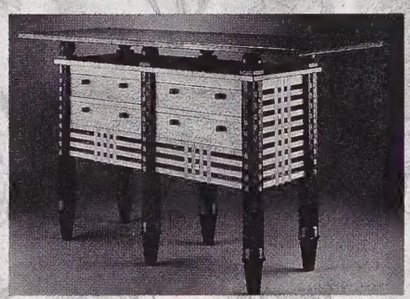

Phillip Tennant
Hall Table #6, 1990
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Martha Schneider Gallery
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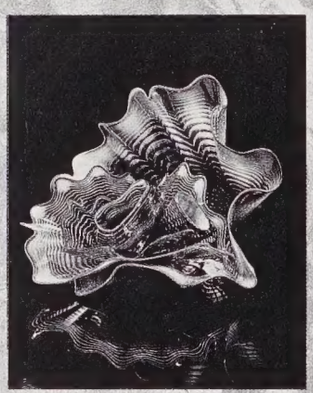

Dale Chihuly
Cobalt Green Light and Oxblood Persian Set, 1990 Glass
Betsy Rosenfield Gallery, Chicago

Edward S. Eberle
New Life, 1989 Porcelain
Joanne Rapp / The Hand and The Spirit Gallery, Scottsdale

Colin Gorry
Untitled, 1989
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Michaelson and Orient, London

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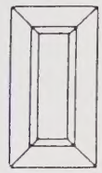
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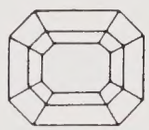
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The Society of North American Goldsmiths (SNAG) was formed in 1970 to promote contemporary metalwork and jewelry. Through its publications, services and advocacy, SNAG serves the fine art and jewelry communities. SNAG's publications and conferences provide technical information and critical insight to practitioners and teachers of metalwork. Professional metalsmiths, students, collectors, gallery owners and enthusiasts make up the dynamic mix of the Society.

Services

The Society's annual conference provides a forum for the exchange of many points of view. Speakers of national recognition offer stimulating discourse on a range of topics. Members of the Society attend the conference at reduced rates.

The Society sponsors important exhibitions of contemporary metalwork. Past SNAG shows have been mounted at the Renwick Gallery, the St. Paul Museum of Art and several galleries in New York City. These exhibitions are usually restricted to members only.

The Society maintains an audio-visual library, which contains the portfolios of Distinguished Members and other notable metalsmiths. Members can rent slides, films and videotapes at a nominal cost.

The Society operates a discount book service, through which important texts on all aspects of the field can be ordered at a reduced price.

Publications

Metalsmith is the only magazine in America devoted solely to the metal arts. Please see the reverse side of this page for a detailed description of this exciting magazine. Membership in the Society includes a subscription to *Metalsmith.*

The *SNAG Newsletter* is published bimonthly and is available to members only. It features timely information on exhibitions, workshops, conferences and job opportunities throughout North America.

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THE PROFIFORM 200

The Profiform 200 is the amazing 3 function Swiss-made metalworking tool that combines bench shear, bending brake, and hole punch in one compact unit. Imported exclusively by Frei & Borel company in the United States.

The clean cutting Profiform Bench Shear is unsurpassed for making precise straight cuts of non-ferrous metals up to 1.0mm (18 Gauge) thick and 200mm wide. Metal cut by the Profiform will have no telltale lip or deformation on the edge. No shear we've ever tested cuts cleaner or easier.

The Profiform also is a Bending Brake, for bending metal up to a 90° angle. This function can be used to make corrugated designs or small boxes, a handy addition to this marvelous shear.

The **new improved** Hold Punches cut precise circles or squares from a sheet up to 1.0mm thick. The individual dies are machined to higher tolerances than the original hole punches, and are easier to remove from the metal, causing less deformation.

Bending and cutting capacity:

Usable width	7⅞″ (200mm)
Maximal material thickness: Gold, silver, brass, copper, tin-plate	0.040″ (1.0mm)
Aluminum plate	0.060″ (1.5mm)

Hole Punches:

○	3.0, 4.0, 5.0, 6.0, 8.0, 10.0mm
□	4 × 4, 6 × 6, 8 × 8, 10 × 10, 12 × 12mm
▭	4 × 20mm

Dimensions:

3″ depth, 7″ height, 10″ width

Price:

Basic unit with bending brake	$595.00
Punch holder	215.00
Individual round punch	65.00
Individual four corner punch	85.00
Complete unit with bending brake and all hole punches (save 15%)	1495.00

CALL 1-800-772-3456

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